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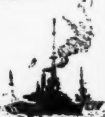
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THE IMPROVEMENT OF POOR LAND

FROM the official agricultural statistics it is known that about three million and a half acres of land were allowed to revert to pasture between 1892 and the present time. Even in the 'seventies the proportion of grass to arable was larger than it should be in Great Britain, and there can be no doubt whatever that an important addition to the food supply would result from a return of at least an equivalent number of acres to tillage. But, failing that, the food supply is capable of very substantial increase by the improvement of poor pasture. In this week's paper we give a brief account of a most instructive example of the manner in which this can be done. Professor Somerville deserves

to be congratulated not only on having achieved a fine success for himself, but on having given a lesson of the greatest value to the nation. Half a dozen years ago he was tempted to buy at a bargain price some five hundred acres or more in the neighbourhood of Newhaven. It is a beautiful part of the country and it has won an ill deserved notoriety by having been prostituted to the base purpose of the land speculator. It would not fall within our scope to pronounce judgment on those who promoted or in any way encouraged that enterprise, but no agriculturist will fail to regret the result. Over the plots and spaces which have been marked out for human habitation, nettles and other weeds have spread, and the place has been rendered desolate. It may be argued that the total proportion of land thus wasted is not very large in proportion to that of Great Britain, but waste of any kind is to be deplored in these times, and there ought to be some law for punishing those whose efforts result in the appearance of weeds where useful crops might have been grown. Denton Hill is charmingly situated for an experiment of this kind. The rolling Downs overlook the Channel; Firtle Beacon rises just outside the farm boundary; and the mound called Bourg, which marks the meeting place of five estates each belonging to a peer, is at no great distance. Prince Duleep Singh, whose soul is vexed at the thought of the cankerweed and the bugloss in Norfolk being put aside for wheat and potatoes, will be glad to learn that the exertions of Professor Somerville have added very greatly to the amenity of the district. At one time or another it is probable that those downs were to some extent covered with forest, but there is little to indicate what trees would succeed best there now. However, a professor of forestry cannot but be aware of the good effect which well-planted woodlands have upon crops when they are carefully designed as shelter belts, so a number of plantations have been established on the hillsides and in the hollows, and as they are surrounded with the most beautiful of brooms, the Spanish, they add greatly to the natural beauty of the Downs.

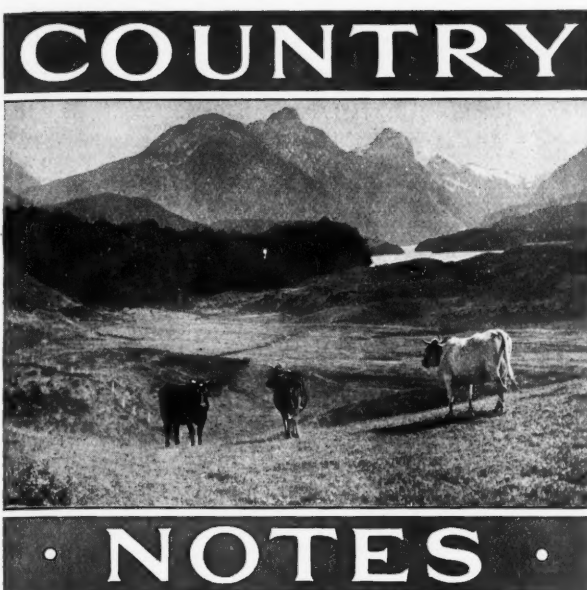
This, however, was only a lighter task. The real object steadily kept in view has been to increase the fertility of the land. It was almost in a derelict condition. Land near by is let for a very few shillings per acre and is scarcely worth the money. When the open field system prevailed, the peasants evidently grew crops there, for the linches are still to be seen, and in the golden age of agriculture, when prices ruled high, the modern farmer ploughed many parts of the Downs. That has not hindered them from falling into mere desert in our day. The fine clovers and grasses have practically disappeared. Gorse has thrown out in great acreages and the least desirable of grasses, litter grass, as it is termed in the locality, has grown and flourished. To bring in the hill so that it could resume its original condition of good grazing land, Professor Somerville used no means that are not within the power of anyone commanding similar land. A good dressing of basic slag, applied when he came into possession and repeated in the course of a year or two, has had the most marvellous effect upon the vegetation.

The coarse grasses and useless herbage have given place to leguminous plants, with the result that the grazing value of the Downs has enormously increased, as one could easily perceive from the sleekness of the cattle and the fatness of the breeding ewes, to say nothing about the well-grown lambs. This is the more remarkable, because the numbers grazed are far in advance of those kept by the immediate predecessor. Nobody could wish to see better or more promising stock. The letting value of the land, at a moderate computation, has been increased from 2s. 6d. or 3s. an acre to at least 12s. 6d. or 13s., probably very much more, if we take into account the present value of mutton and beef. A corresponding improvement has been effected on the tillage land which goes with the Downs, and, altogether, fertility has been increased by easy and natural methods. It is a lesson in increased productivity which ought to be of priceless service to the nation at large.

Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece is a portrait of Lady Clare Feilding, who is a daughter of the Earl of Denbigh, C.V.O.

. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



FROM a communication in another part of the paper it will be seen that interest in the Methwold reclamation is centred round two points, (a) the maintenance and increase of fertility, and (b) game. On both of these questions local opinion is exercised in a very lively manner. It concedes that the crops on the recovered waste are better than those on the long cultivated farms. "Clinking good crops" is the description of a successful practical cultivator who has no predilection in favour of Continental methods. But he and others will have it that the reason lies in the fertility of the "rotten flag" in its second year. Of course, there is no denying that land left to itself for a very long period accumulates fertility and the flag adds to it; but cannot the fertility be maintained? The husbandman's natural caution induces him to doubt it, but the experience in countries where a great deal of land has been reclaimed enables them to answer with an undoubting affirmative. They argue that nothing has been taken out of the soil which cannot be returned, and, as each expert has his own way of dealing with this problem, several effective means are given for not only keeping up the fertility of the soil, but increasing it each year. It is not asserted that those who have had no previous experience may count on doing this with certainty. When reclamation begins to be carried out on a great scale men will have to be trained to it as they are to every form of agriculture, and holdings should ultimately be occupied only by those who have had this training.

THE problems arising in regard to game are more difficult. But there is an advantage in approaching this subject with a detachment of mind which was not possible in the old controversial days, when it was made a party and class question. Owners and occupiers recognise the difficulty much more than those who look at it from the outside. In our opinion the best method of dealing with it would be by a conference between those of moderate opinions. Hostility to sport is very unlikely to win adherents in this country for many a day to come. Love of sport in reality permeates all classes. On the other hand, we have in our possession communications from landowners whose names stand high among sportsmen and whose loyalty to the ancient pastimes of country gentlemen cannot be disputed, who recognise that very drastic changes must be made. The offender who finds least favour in anybody's eye is undoubtedly the rabbit. His existence cannot be tolerated in land devoted to forestry, for instance, as he will render the labours of the woodman vain. No doubt it is possible for the farmer to exclude rabbits from ground by an elaborate system of wire-netting, but it is recognised to be unfair that an owner of land should be obliged to go to this expense in order to protect himself against rabbits encouraged by his neighbours. In Belgium he would have a cause of action against those who permitted the rabbits from a refuge in their land to damage crops in that adjoining it.

BY far the most satisfactory plan would be to bring into consultation those who have the best interests of the country at heart, and are not bound to give a thick and

thin support either to one view or another. What can be asserted positively is that the war has produced a very widening and true revolution of thought in extremists at both ends of the controversy. Never in history was a better opportunity presented of arriving by friendly discussion at an amicable and satisfactory decision. The landowner whose story is given has no strong prejudice on his part. He felt it his duty to bring certain land into cultivation and could make nothing out of it. It was not by his seeking that a neighbour offered him three times the value of the land for sporting purposes that he would have taken for it for agricultural purposes. But he recognises this to be an anomaly of a regretful kind, as it may have a tendency to make owners hold back either from reclaiming their land or selling it at an agricultural price, because of the hope it engenders that a fancy price may be realised for it as shooting ground.

A VERY interesting proposal has recently been mooted.

It is that the Board of Agriculture should set up an information bureau for the benefit of those who wish to start on British land. At the present moment if anyone desires information about land in the Crown Colonies, he can go to the office in London of any Dominion and be certain of the most courteous reception and the most helpful and intelligent advice in regard to the best way in which he can realise his wishes. If, on the other hand, he is thinking of taking up such rural pursuits as are possible in the Old Country, there is no particular office at which he can apply with the certainty of receiving the same kind of help. Even the Board of Agriculture is tainted with the circumlocutory methods which prevail throughout British officialdom. There is very little chance of an enquirer receiving there the sympathetic, prompt and efficient advice which is given free, gratis and for nothing at a Crown Colony centre. It therefore might be well worth while for the Minister of Agriculture to establish such a bureau. It should be manned by those who know exactly the openings and possibilities for home colonisation. If the organisation were set on foot before the return of the ex-soldiers it would help greatly towards their satisfactory settlement.

BREAKFAST IN THE GARDEN.

The china gleams
Where Mary-lilies waken from their dreams.
And roses shed
Their petals red
On amber honeycomb and roll of bread.
A wandering bee
Hums o'er the butter in its cradling leaf,
And suddenly
The fickle northern sunshine, hot and brief,
Falling on grey-dewed lawn,
With burning ray
Has driven away
The chill remembrance of the dawn.
Full of grace
This silent place,
Full of prayer
The sunlit air;
The fret of care,
The coming day's unrest,
Are by this one short hour redeemed and blest.

ISABEL BUTCHART.

LAST week-end was the best the Allies have experienced. The most heartening and encouraging news came from almost every part of the front. The French, after fighting a defensive battle with unheard-of tenacity, have been able to turn the tables on the foe and take the offensive. The fighting at Thiaumont was particularly brilliant, and the recapture of Fleury is an event that must have struck dismay into the Germans, whose strongest counter-attacks failed to dislodge our Allies. Sir Douglas Haig at the same time made a most brilliant advance, the operation being characterised by the almost mechanical precision which is in keeping with his genius. At the same time the Russians were continuing their victorious attacks and adding immensely to that capture of prisoners which has marked their offensive throughout its second stage. Our army in Egypt appears to have had no difficulty in thrusting back the Turks, who were no doubt egged on to the offensive by the Germans. The Allied pressure is being exerted with the utmost force on every part of the front, and it will be a miracle indeed if all the strength of the Germans enables them to withstand it for any considerable length of time.

IN the Great Advance our new Territorial troops have covered themselves with glory, and we are glad two of them are included among the nine new V.C.s. No reading is better calculated to fill us with pride than the records of those nine. There was, for instance, Lieutenant Jones of the Lancshires. He and his platoon had taken possession of a crater recently captured from the enemy, but at the same time a heavy barrage of fire was directed on our trenches so that it was impossible for help to arrive. Lieutenant Jones rallied his men and kept up their spirits by his splendid example. He shot fifteen Germans one after the other, counting them as he did so to encourage the platoon, and when his ammunition was exhausted he seized a bomb and would have continued the conflict had he not been shot in the head. The men were so fired by his example that when they had no more cartridges or bombs they threw stones and ammunition boxes at the enemy, till only nine were left and they had to retire. As an example of a different kind of courage, take Private George William Chafer of the East Yorkshires. During the heavy bombardment a man carrying an important message from the Company Commander was half buried and rendered unconscious by a shell. Private Chafer, instantaneously grasping the situation, took the message from the man's pocket, and under heavy shell and machine-gun fire rushed along the ruined parapet and just succeeded in delivering his message before he collapsed.

GENERAL JOFFRE has gained for himself a position in the confidence of the whole world that is probably unique. For this reason, if for no other, great attention will be paid to the interview which he has accorded a journalist of the United States. In this interview he expresses himself with the utmost confidence as to the final issue of the war. The great part played by France is that she has enabled the Allies, who were quite unfitted to undertake war when it broke out, to prepare for united action. He glances briefly, but eloquently at the various parts they are playing now. Russia is able to pour on the Eastern front armed masses which have attained the recent glorious achievements in Galicia. England has been enabled to organise her full power of mobilisation, and the fighting valour of her soldiers has now been demonstrated on the Somme. Italy's sphere of action is more limited, but her achievements are splendid. The newly organised Serbian army has displayed during the last week the unbroken valour with which she is ready to resume the campaign. Thus has been foiled the German plan of quickly transferring reserves to various fronts. "Victory for us is now certain," concludes General Joffre. "It is not for me to say how long the struggle will last before the final breakdown of the enemy's strength comes, as come I am absolutely certain it will." At the same time, he does not fall into the error of underestimating the strength of the enemy. "We still have two-thirds of the whole German armies, that is to say, 122 divisions, facing the Anglo-French forces." The remaining fifty divisions are co-operating with the Austrians against the Russians. Of the French army, he says it is stronger to-day than it ever was before, and altogether sets out a convincing argument in favour of a victorious termination of the war for the Allies.

THE only point of real interest in regard to the attempted invasion of Egypt by Turkey lies in the object by which it was inspired. Clearly the enemy commanders must have been very ill informed. Probably the Germans, who have been thoroughly misled about the extent of the British resources, calculated that Egypt had been denuded of troops in order to strengthen the attack on the West. In that case they may have ordered the Turks to attack in the hope of making a diversion and with at least a remote chance of success. It is very evident that if they had known or guessed the extent of our forces in Egypt, they would have refrained from this attempt, which can have no other effect than that of weakening and disheartening the Turkish army. Sir Archibald Murray, on his part, appears to have been very well informed in regard to the dispositions and intentions of the enemy. As far as we can gather at the present moment, the battle was fought on our part with the greatest skill, as well as with the customary courage on the part of the troops. It is a good omen for the success of the Russian armies now in Asia Minor that the Turks could only spare 14,000 troops for such a very important enterprise as the invasion of Egypt.

MAXIMILIAN HARDEN is no doubt a kind of Ishmael among journalists. He is a Bohemian who started on the lowest rung of the ladder, and he is a Jew whom the

Germans have expatriated. From his neutral fastness in Switzerland, however, he still addresses his old German audience in the *Zukunft*, and his detachment enables him to speak more of the truth than any of the other Teutonic journalists of the day. He makes hay of the belief that Great Britain can be seriously humbled by the Kaiser. Only "favour or Heaven" could produce that result. Impartial people have reported to him that London's face has shown no fear. Her ships sail regularly to and from America and she can barricade the roads by which raw materials reach Germany. Therefore he issues the warning "We shall see more naked misery and hard need in the third year than in many ordinary years." He points to Russia's armies in Galicia and in the Bukovina; he directs attention to the "admirable upward swing of the French power of resistance," and the "great embattled armies" which Britain now has in the field. Here is a gloomy but not falsified prospect.

BISMARCK'S phrase about blood and iron is shown by M. Fernand Engerand's article on Lorraine to be an exactly literal expression of German aims. When the two provinces were snatched from France in 1871 it was supposed that Germany had grabbed all the valuable iron deposits of the locality, but an Englishman's invention altered all that. By the Thomas process the ores which remained in French territory at Briey have been made far more valuable than the surface mines in German Lorraine now worked out in part. And so it is that the German manufacturers have put their hopes on securing the Briey mines as the result of this war, an aim which France may now be confident of foiling. If, on the contrary, all Lorraine returns into French ownership the industrial power of Germany will be sensibly weakened.

"DAWN."

Pearl grey and silver—slowly comes the dawning—
Ponderous grey battleships ploughing through the seas,
Grey is the horizon, sky and water mingled;
Dawn is dim and hollow-eyed, chilly is the breeze.

Pearl grey and silver, primrose tints are growing—
See the shell-scarred fighting ships rolling through the seas,
Battered turrets, gaping hulls, splintered decks and burns—
All the smell of fire and fight swept before the breeze.

Hulls upon the skyline, moving oh, so slowly—
Crippled ships that crawl for home, labouring through the seas—
Golden sunlight floods the grey, touching with day's fingers
Tattered ensigns proudly flying, taut before the breeze.

Pearl grey and silver, mystery and bugle call;
Pain and pride are mingled when the guns boom down the breeze,
Grey is the horizon, blurred with tears of heartbreak
Then the golden light of pride breaks glorious o'er the seas.

M. G. MEUGENS.

THIS number is timed to appear on what used to be considered the glorious festival of St. Grouse. We will not apply that phrase to it under present circumstances, because there is no sportsman who will find it glorious to shoot birds while his fellow-countrymen are engaged in the stern task of fighting the Germans. At the same time, there are many reasons why the opening of the grouse season should not go unobserved. There is none so gloomily pessimistic as to believe that the time is far distant when open air sports may be resumed without scruple. A thoroughly well-informed correspondent sends a forecast of the season that is, to say the least, not encouraging: "The reports from Scotland concerning grouse seem to be uniformly bad, and moors are letting very slowly. The birds were fairly healthy during the winter owing to the good heather conditions; but the unbroken snow on the high ground in the spring, which extended from the end of February till April, rendered the conditions as bad as they have ever been known. Frosts alternating with thaw, and the general climatic conditions served to reduce the number of birds, quite apart from their internal troubles, which became pronounced on the lower moors through their overcrowded condition. Dead birds were picked up all over the place. With the return of warm weather in May the birds ceased to die *en masse*, but the nests were small and late and the hatch was bad and broods belated. 'Vermin and burning' are still the key-stones of grouse disease and grouse health."

POVERTY BOTTOM AND POVERTY BOTTOMS

A LESSON FROM DOWNLAND



GORSE ON UNIMPROVED LAND.

POVERTY BOTTOM is the old, plain-spoken name for the Downland Farm near Newhaven where Professor Somerville is giving his countrymen a needed and valuable lesson on the improvement of poor land. It received its present more genteel name of Denton

Hill at a time when land speculators were trying to lure a confiding British public into acquiring plots on its outskirts whereon to erect villas. The beauty of the neighbourhood has often tempted the flat-catcher to exploit it. Is not Anzac-by-the-Sea within sight? It is now overgrown with weeds, a veritable Aylmer's Field, where

Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made his run,
The hedgehog underneath the plantain bores,
The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin weasel there
Follows the mouse, . . .

When England does in real earnest wake up to the need of land for her sons short shrift will be given to those who have vulgarised, defaced and ruined seaside districts for the most sordid motives. Long ago the country was not so wasteful. The scene which intoxicates with delight the poet of to-day,

Oh Firtle an' Ditchling an' sails
at sea,
I reckon you keep my soul for me!

was, when early history was in the making, gazed upon men who toiled to make those downs yield a harvest. You can, on the shoulders of the hills and the fertile bottoms, still see the linches and balks that proclaim that here was the open field, beyond which probably on the exposed gorse-clad



A BOUNTEOUS HARVEST.

hillsides was the common pasture, the waste of the manor as it was technically called. In the stirring days of Continental warfare the energetic farmers who made English agriculture the best in the world of their time brought much of the poor land under the plough. Portions of it were kept in tillage till the days of the great agricultural depression. There is a man in the prime of life working on the farm at this moment who in the nineties of last century drove the plough over land on which Professor Somerville is struggling with the gorse that has been allowed to take full possession of it. What caused it to be neglected was the enormous fall in prices. Our forefathers were prompt to bring into cultivation every hillside on which even a poor crop



CATTLE ON THE DOWNS.

but to neglected, ill-cultivated fields. It opens up a much more pressing, though not a more important, branch of the agricultural task that has to be tackled. To bring poor grassland back to fertility, whether as improved pasture or as arable, is a pressing duty and most profitable business. National requirements explain its urgency—its imperative necessity. In plain speech, a country faced with the need of more home-grown food cannot afford to allow the land to remain in the hands of those who are incompetent or unwilling to take measures for increasing its productivity. Not that much threatening or compulsion is likely to be required when a few more Poverty Bottoms are taken in hand!

The story of the achievement reads like a hymn in praise of basic slag. Yet those who wish to do the like will err if they think a manure can work a miracle. Professor Somerville, it hardly needs saying, is a master of scientific husbandry, and his general cultivation is that of a very shrewd and competent farmer. When he bought the 530 acres of land in February, 1911, which he did for £6 5s. per acre, he saw that what it required was, above all things, basic slag, and he bought 200 tons which were brought from



HAY CUTTING AND CORN HARVEST COME TOGETHER THIS YEAR.

of corn would grow when war sent prices up. But Professor Somerville had not this incentive when he started work in 1911. The country was at peace and that is where the value of the lesson comes in. To old-fashioned farmers, whether they lived in the eighteenth century or are to-day clinging to land they do not know how to develop, Poverty Bottom is a difficult and forbidding proposition.

No wonder they shrink from it, if they still depend upon the labouring ox and the labouring ill paid men. And they do. Poverty Bottom, though it figures under different names, occurs freely wherever there is downland. Arthur Young estimated that there are a hundred thousand acres of down between Shoreham and Eastbourne. Here and there a farm is well cultivated, but when this is so it is usually surrounded with Poverty Bottoms. That is equally true of the Wiltshire Downs and the Berkshire Downs, and, indeed, of every English county.

I do not here refer to land relinquished as waste,



CHEVIOT EWES AND SOUTHDOWN CROSS LAMBS.

Middlesbrough to Newhaven in a sloop. An application of some 8cwt. to the acre was made and a "supplementary blessing" added in 1914 and 1915.

On the hill marvellous results followed, though they were not immediate. For the weather proved very unfavourable to the operation of basic slag, which, of course, is available for plant food only when it is soluble. The year 1911 was one of the many records which have been established on the Sussex Downs since Professor Somerville began farming. It turned out to be the driest and hottest year, and hence the return for this manure was deferred.

But the weather continued to make records. The year 1912 produced the driest April and nearly the driest month on record (February, 1891, holds the record for dryness); it was noted also for those terrible floods in August, of which we gave a pretty full account at the time. The year 1913 had a very wet spring, "one of the wettest and coldest on record," and a very wet September. The year 1914 set up a record for the wettest December, though it was followed



RED STANDARD WHEAT.

The staff in Professor Somerville's hand is 5ft. high.

which have not been treated. One would hesitate about paying a rent of half-a-crown an acre for them. Of a great portion gorse has taken possession, and, indeed, to get rid of it or at least keep it within bounds was an important minor problem at Poverty Bottom. The plan followed was to burn in July when the strength of the gorse is in the bush and the growth is putting a strain on the roots. But on the unimproved land beyond the boundary it covers acres with high, thick growth. Each stretch might be taken for a fox covert were it not that there are so many. Where there is any eatable herbage

it is grazed bare by the ill conditioned sheep. The only flourishing herbage is the uneatable *Brachypodium pinnatum*. Locally it is termed litter grass, from the custom of selling it to be cut and carted as litter. You see it in clumps, and the clumps grow larger and larger till they spread over wide areas. It is of even less use than the gorse. How different the vegetation on the improved part! Among the plants that have come up very kindly, in addition to the profuse



BURNING THE GORSE.



BRACHYPODIUM PINNATUM.

This litter grass spreads over the unmanured down.

by a very wet December in 1915. The winter of 1914-15 was the wettest winter on record. The year 1916 gave us by far the warmest January on record, which in its turn produced the highest average mean night and day temperatures and the highest maximum day temperature ever noted for that month. Its March was also a record for total moisture and for the wettest March day, to say nothing of the great blizzard. It is to be doubted if there was an ounce of March dust in the British Isles. March also set up other records, namely, number of hours in which rain fell and the lowest evaporation on record. June in this year again came very near being a record as the coldest of its name, it only escaping this bad eminence by not being two-tenths of a degree warmer than the same month in 1909.

To return to 1911 it will easily be understood that its aridity spelt loss. Next year, however, the excessive moisture rectified the error and the basic slag produced its natural results in a fine growth of leguminous plants. To realise the change it is necessary to look at the downs

wild white clover, there must be numbered the hop clover, red clover, suckling clover (*Trifolium minus*), the bird's foot trefoil, black medick, kidney vetch and so on. It may interest the botanist to know that other common plants are the hawk-bit, burnet, common scabious and sheep's scabious, the little woodruff, the stemless thistle, the cudweed, and many others, that revel in drought and lime. This was how Poverty Bottom was found in 1911, and in those days it carried a flock of 100 ewes and 40 cattle. To-day it supports a

herd of 120 cattle and a flock of over 200 ewes. And the mere figures do not tell the story. To understand it a comparison must be made between the ill grown, lean stock on the unimproved downs and the healthy, well grown animals that fatten on the new clover.

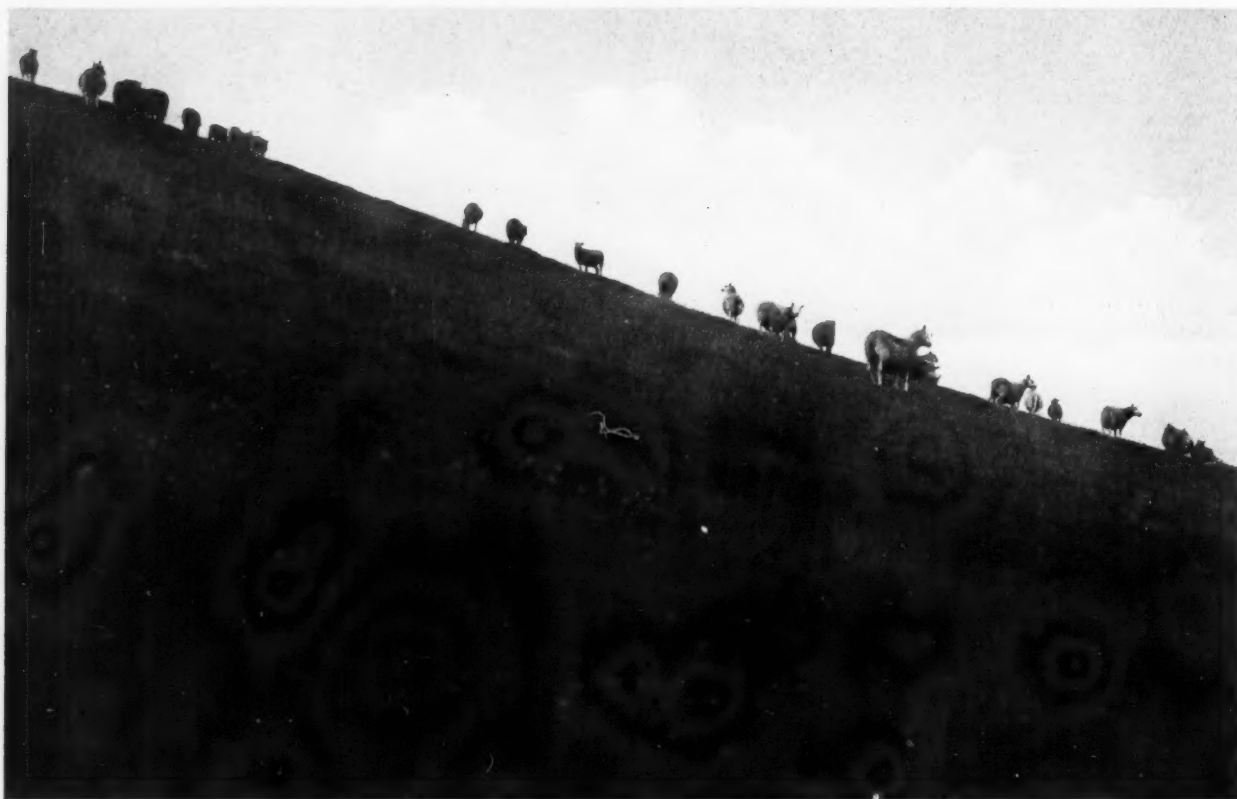
It was interesting to trace out the history of the cattle. About a dozen milk cows are mated with a polled Angus Lull. He must be a prepotent example of a dominant breed, since whatever the dam may be, the calves arrive black and remain hornless, and with the compact



SUCKLING TWO AT A TIME.

"blocky" shape characteristic of the premier Scottish beef breed. In addition to the calves from the herd, about three times as many "weaners" are purchased at Lewes. Each cow is expected to nurse five calves in the season—two and two and one. The cows are brought home to suckle the calves early in the morning and again in the afternoon. It was pretty to watch the early feeding. The time, 6 a.m. (man's time, not God's time!), five o'clock in the morning if you are old-fashioned. A cold bath and a porridge breakfast had attuned the mind to the natural beauty of the scene. In the valley a jolly old steading, kine lowing, calves crying to be fed, a refreshing breeze from the north-east,

blossoms are put forth well into November, while in those mild Sussex valleys the shrub keeps flowering up to Christmas and after. It has the additional merit of being beloved by ground game. Rabbits are fenced out of the plantations with wire, but hares pass with a leap over the obstacle. They like the broom better than any other tree or shrub, and give their attention to it in preference, whereby the young trees are saved. Round the house the yellow Spanish broom has been sown with equal freedom, but there the flower and foliage are kept down by vast numbers of snails that in their shells crawl up to the tenderest swaying spirelets and eat the fresh young sproutings as a human being eats asparagus. Away from the house, however,



PART OF THE BREEDING FLOCK.

blue sky, shining sun and not far off the splash of a summer sea—the scene started a medley of thoughts and recollections of Eumæus, Nausicaa, the swains of Theocritus, the hive and tilth of the Georgics all mixed with the delicious impressions of a summer day on the Sussex Downs, while the sturdy calves dunted the udders of the milky mothers, which seemed to enjoy the process. In plain prose it is a capital system, and it finds expression in the poetry of a good balance-sheet. The Professor's fancy ran strongly on the blacks when he started in this part of the world, but experience has deepened his appreciation of the red cattle of the county, and certainly their sleek and shining coats seem to show that they thrive and fatten on their native heath better than any foreigner. His ewes are Cheviots, and they are crossed with Southdown rams; a splendid arrangement, for the lambs are full of vigour and increase in weight without an ounce of cake to an extent that must astonish the native farmer if he ever attends to it. Only they are a conservative people on the Downs, and each goes his own way regardless of what anyone else does. In speaking of the pastoral side of the farm it is impossible not to allude to the tree planting which has been done.

Professor Somerville is, perhaps, above everything else, a forester, and he has laid out what ought to prove very instructive plantations. They are not grown primarily for timber, but for the sake of shelter and amenity. The attainment of the latter point is greatly helped by a free use of the Spanish broom. Seed has been lavishly sown, and it has come up in the shape of hedges round the plantations, to which they act as windbreaks and also as clumps of broom in the midst of other trees. The Spanish broom serves a double purpose. It is a fine, free blooming broom that comes into flower early in July, and even in the neighbourhood of London

thrushes and other birds keep down the snails so thoroughly that there was not one to be seen.

Little space has been left to discourse on the eighty acres, more or less, which are in tillage. But a little essay might be written on them alone, for here also basic slag has worked wonders; we should say basic slag combined with very skilful cultivation. In 1911 the sale of grain came to £23, while the crop of 1915 realised £367. Our photographs show the heavy crops of oats and wheat, and in both cases the picture is taken in the weakest part of the respective fields. It should be noted, however, that the rivet wheat, which is supposed to be the best for a poor soil, although it came well at the beginning, is now inferior to the other. The excellence of the crop of Red Standard Wheat may be judged by the photograph, in which Professor Somerville's by no means diminutive frame is shown almost engulfed by the ears. The staff which he holds is 5ft. long, and the yield will probably run to 50 bushels per acre, as compared with 20 bushels in the land's unimproved condition. But the triumph of triumphs is the crop of mangolds, which is good enough to compare with the very best to be seen anywhere.

To sum up our impressions: Here is a farm typical of wide stretches of land, which in five years has been made to produce a quadrupled supply of food with a return to the owner which might well encourage imitators, with advantage both to themselves and the country. The secret lies in feeding leguminous plants with phosphates, these fix nitrogen from the air, the stock consume the produce, fatten quickly, and make rich manure, much of which goes on to the tillage land to feed roots and cereals, and so the process goes on. People may say what they like about grassland, but where it is made to supply cheap fertility to the tillage area it is performing a function for which a substitute cannot easily be found.

IN THE GARDEN

A NEW INDUSTRY: HOME-GROWN BULBS.

AT a time when we are looking around to see what industries we should start or foster after the war, the peaceful art of bulb growing looms prominently into sight. It is an industry which has everything in its favour, and its importance is greatly enhanced by the recent Act prohibiting any shipping being used for the importation of flower bulbs. It may come as a surprise to many to learn that thoroughly good bulbs of almost all kinds can be grown here quite as well as in any other country. The Royal Horticultural Society's recent exhibition of British-grown bulbs afforded a pleasing example of the suitability of our soils and climate for producing crops of many kinds of bulbs which hitherto have been imported so largely from Holland. The recent Act has, however, caught us unawares, and in consequence there are certain bulbs which are very scarce this season, such as early single and double Tulips; while of Hyacinths, Crocuses and *Scilla sibirica*, to name a few popular items, there are next to none in the country. If only the intentions of the Government had been anticipated by our nurserymen last autumn, they would have arranged their plantings accordingly and had a full abundance of these special bulbs, for there is not the slightest doubt that we are quite able to produce practically all the bulbous plants required by the public.

We may justly claim the Daffodil as a British flower. The best known varieties, such as Emperor, Empress, Horsfieldii and Barrii conspicuus, which fill our florists' shops, were raised here by English hybridisers. And yet the public demand for Dutch-grown Daffodils has been so great that tons of English-grown bulbs have been sent to Holland, only to be again sold as Dutch-grown. At the present time there are large supplies of Daffodil bulbs in England. Happily, too, we have large supplies of May-flowering, Darwin and Cottage Tulips,

Tulip bulbs may not always have the same light appearance as those from Holland and may not perhaps be so large, but it has been proved over and over again that the flowering results are certainly better. We have seen the difference in Messrs. Barr and Sons' nurseries, where imported Dutch Tulip bulbs have been planted side by side with home-grown bulbs. The English bulbs have made slightly taller growth, flowered earlier and produced larger blooms. Other bulbs and bulb-like flowers which grow well in England are Gladioli, Scillas, Muscari, Anemones, Ranunculuses, Ixias (in Guernsey and Ireland), Montbretias and Lilies, with the exception of Japanese and Indian varieties. There are certain bulbs, like bulbous Irises, Crocuses and *Scilla sibirica*, which can be successfully grown here, although it is doubtful if the home grower will ever be able to beat Holland in price, since the Dutch cultures are so large and worked on a most economical scale. It has often been asserted that we could never hope to compete with Holland in growing Hyacinths owing to unsuitable soil conditions, but this is an open question, for it is becoming well known that there are certain places, notably in the Eastern Counties, where Hyacinths can be grown to perfection. At present this cannot be done on an extensive scale, but there are possibilities, and it is hoped that they will be developed.

INFORMAL EDGINGS TO FLOWER BORDERS.

IN gardening it so often happens that the simplest arrangement is the most pleasing, and this is certainly the case with edgings to the hardy flower borders. Alas, how often a charming picture is blurred by an ugly margin! Nothing looks worse than badly kept Box edgings, and expensive tiles are unnecessary to the effectiveness of the herbaceous border. The informal edging is in keeping with the hardy flower border, costs nothing and is no trouble to keep up.



HARDY FLOWER BORDERS AT CLAREMONT.

and vast fields are to be seen in bloom in May both in the West and East of England; while in Ireland they are grown acre upon acre with great success, and there is every reason to suppose that a greatly increased acreage in Ireland will be devoted to bulb growing in the near future. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that remarkably good produce was sent from Ireland to the Royal Horticultural Society's recent exhibition of dry bulbs at Westminster. It is, however, mainly for cut blooms that Tulips are grown in the British Isles, whereas the bulbs are greatly improved if the flowers are not cut. English-grown

Here and there low-growing plants, like *Nepeta*, dwarf Veronicas, Tufted Pansies, Saxifrages and creeping Campanulas, should be encouraged in their wanderings, so long as they do not encroach too far over the pathway. Plants of medium height, like Peonies, Mallows, Anchusas, medium Campanulas, Phloxes and Clary, may here and there be allowed to fall over the walks with an air of careless beauty. A very pleasing feature of the historic gardens at Claremont, Esher, Surrey, is seen in its hardy flower borders, which are kept bright with a succession of flowers throughout the summer and early autumn months.

FOUR HOURS WITH A REED WARBLER

BY OSWALD J. WILKINSON.

HARK! A veritable torrent of song bursts forth from the reed bed fringing the riverside. As we quietly saunter along and approach the more secluded parts it appears to increase in volume and intensity. The still warm days of the late spring and early summer, when all is peaceful and quiet, should be selected for hearing this delightful creature. The song—if one may call it a song—is not unlike that of

the sedge warbler, a persistent chattering, yet more melodious than that of its fellow warbler. Let us conceal ourselves for a moment and perchance we may catch a glimpse of the vocalist. The sound ceases abruptly as we betray our presence, and a flutter in the reed stems enables us to obtain a fleeting glance at the songster as he shifts his position. Now we can observe him plainly as he clings to one of the reed stems and pours forth his love song most vehemently,



10.10.—THE HEN STANDS OVER THE NEST TO PROTECT THE YOUNG FROM THE SUN.



10.12.—THE COCK ABOUT TO BROOD AFTER FEEDING THE YOUNG.

as if his little heart would burst, in an ecstasy of delight and happiness. It is the reed warbler. On he sings, turning his tiny head from side to side as his mate flits by, and urging her on in her domestic duties by his incessant chatter, or song, of deep affection for his little Brown spouse.

Let us note his size and markings. Five and a half inches of daintiness, reddish brown above and yellowish white beneath. The throat is white, the wings rich brown edged with olive. Unlike the sedge warbler, there is no white streak through the eye. The tail is long and rounded, and the sides of the body are just faintly tinged with russet. Of the two sexes, the male is slightly the larger of the two.



11.19.—AFTER CLEANING UP THE NEST THE COCK PROCEEDS TO BROOD.

The reed warbler is a migratory species, arriving on these shores somewhat later than most species. April is well advanced before its arrival is announced, and early in September it is said to make its departure. It is common in the South of England, its most favoured locality, but rare in the more northern counties, Wales, and the extreme western peninsula.

The nest of the reed warbler is selected by that parasitic species the "lewde Cuckowe," as Chaucer has it, in which to deposit its egg, more frequently than that of any other species, save perhaps that of the meadow pipit. It is wonderful that such a dainty, frail looking structure should be capable of supporting the weight of a bird like a young cuckoo, yet it does so till the chick grows heavy.

In order that an inspection of the reed warbler's home may be made at close quarters, it is often necessary to wade among the reeds; this is a disagreeable business, unless you possess a pair of waders. However, one is apt to disregard trifling inconveniences when the mysteries surrounding the home of the reed warbler arouse one's curiosity. So in we wade, and carefully threading our way through the tall-growing reeds, during which process one comes to the conclusion that the body of a water rail is more suitable than the human form for passing through reed beds, we at length perceive the object of our quest. The nest is situated not more than 3ft. inside the far side of the reed bed, and suspended from the stems of three or four reeds, above the water surface. It is composed of dried grass, cleverly interwoven, and the deep cup-shaped interior is

lined with fine dried rootlets. So firmly secured is it that, no matter how the wind may blow or how the nest may swing in the storm, it rarely falls, and the eggs hardly ever roll out.

The usual clutch of eggs, which are generally laid in May and June, is four. They are greenish blue in ground colour, with spots of greenish brown, and a few faint black hair streaks here and there. Their length is about three-quarters of an inch, by half an inch wide, and incubation, as a rule, takes from ten days to a fortnight.

Overcome by a desire to study the home life of this particular reed warbler at close quarters, arrangements were made for conducting observations soon after the young birds were hatched out. The parent birds appeared quite unconcerned while the hiding place was in process of erection, and actually fed their young while the tent was being placed in position.

The day was intensely hot when the writer took up his position in the hide at ten o'clock in the forenoon. The birds were chattering most persistently and flitting about backwards and forwards among the reeds, picking insects off the stems in the short breathing space they allowed themselves. The reeds had been trimmed a little more than was really necessary for the purpose of photography, so at certain hours they had no protection from the sun. That was unfortunate, but as things turned out it mattered little, for it will be seen how the birds adapted themselves to the altered and, perhaps, unnatural conditions.



11.27.—THE HEN CLEANS THE NEST AFTER FEEDING.

From 10 o'clock to 10.30 the parents took it in turns to "brood," standing in the nest and spreading their wings over the young. While one was so engaged the other hunted for insects and grubs. Immediately one parent arrived with food the other sprang away and commenced to hunt. The one that remained behind cleaned the nest by devouring what there was in the way of refuse and pecked at the tiny bodies of the young as if preening them. At 10.36 a cloud passed in front of the sun, so the brooding bird left the nest and joined its mate in the hunt for food.

The cloud passed away at 10.40, when the male remained behind and brooded as before, spreading his wings over the nest and breathing heavily. This continued until 11.16, during which time the female visited the nest and passed food to the young underneath the body of the male. At 11.16 he sprang away immediately the female alighted on the edge of the nest. She fed the young and remained to brood. This interesting behaviour continued as long as the sun was unobscured, and it was delightful to note how quickly the brooding bird perceived the approach of its mate with food and then sprang away from the nest. This occurred



11.48.—THE MALE RETURNS TO THE NEST AND FEEDS THE YOUNG.

every few minutes, each sharing the burden of protecting the young from the rays of the sun.

The male was brooding at 11.53 when the female came and fed the young with flies. On this occasion he did not leave his charge. The writer was treated to a very pretty picture, for the male leaned slightly to one side while standing over the young and allowed the female to pass food to them; he then resumed his previous protective attitude. The next time she arrived, at 11.58, the male departed, so the female remained to brood.

At 12.5 another delightful episode occurred, for instead of feeding the young herself she delivered the black insect she had brought to the male, who transferred it to the young. The sun was obscured by cloud at 12.19, so both of the birds left the nest, returning together nine minutes later. The female brought with her a white moth, but as the male was rather a long time at the nest she swallowed the "feed" herself and left.

Now a very interesting incident occurred, which is a most remarkable example of discernment in bird life. The clouds rolled away from the face of the sun as the male



11.58.—THE HEN FEEDS THE YOUNG FROM THE SAME POSITION.



1.5.—THE HEN PASSES FOOD TO THE MALE, WHO IS ATTENDING THE YOUNG.

was standing on the edge of the nest, prior to springing away in quest of food; he was, in fact, leaning forward as the warm rays passed across his back. Instead of leaving the nest he at once turned himself round, looked at the brood, and spread his wings over them. He thus protected them until another cloud obscured the sun at 12.37, when he departed.

Another delightful episode characterised the birds' behaviour at 1.5. At this time the nest was in shadow and both birds were attending to the young. The male was standing on the edge of the nest and feeding them when the female arrived and clung to a vertical reed stem with the feathers of her head erected. Instead of feeding the nestlings she passed the food to the male and he transferred it to them. During these proceedings the sun came out again, so the male remained to brood and the female departed.

The parents continued to brood and feed in turn until 1.47 when another cloud passed over the face of the sun. One bird remained behind at the nest, for the cloud passed away while it was feeding. At 2 o'clock the nest was again in shadow, and both birds fed at the same time, passing

STAGHUNTING IN THE WEST COUNTRY

THE announcement of bye-meets of the Devon and Somerset Staghoules recalls many a happy recollection and enjoyable day on Exmoor Forest, especially a meet on Cloutsham Ball, though robbed of the famous attraction of an opening meet. Visitors to this charming spot will view with regret the once familiar old thatched farmhouse and buildings which have been quite recently destroyed by fire. And then, too, the absence of once familiar faces at these meets who had gone to the war—many of them never to return—robs still further the occasion of its former charms.

Yet one can but hope that after the war the majority will return to revive and carry on the grand old sport of staghunting, so dear to the heart of the West Countryman. The few who listened to this hope expressed by the late Master (Major Grieg) two years ago on the outbreak of the war, and the eve of his departure to join his regiment, must, to some extent, have lost hope of this when they knew that he would not be one of those to return. And then the veteran huntsman, Arthur Heal, has still more



THE TWO BIRDS ARRIVE TOGETHER, AND THE HEN AWAITS HER TURN WHILE THE COCK FEEDS.

to and fro among the reeds, and arriving at the nest every few minutes.

At 2.15 the writer came away much impressed by what he had seen and learned, and in the happy possession of much food for reflection and thought. One cannot, for lack of space, discourse at any length upon the many delightful episodes which characterise the home life of this most interesting species, yet this brief account of parental devotion may appeal to the reader as a very striking example of instinct in birds. It has already been stated that the site of the nest when selected by the reed warblers for their home was sheltered from the rays of the sun throughout the day, and that the trimming of the reeds changed these conditions. The manner in which the birds adapted themselves to these altered circumstances suggests that a capacity for reasoning is not entirely absent from the feathered mind. This capacity, instinct, better judgment, or whatever it may be called, taught these dainty morsels that it would not be beneficial for young reed warblers to remain exposed to the rays of the sun. One must confess they displayed a fine appreciation of the fitness of things as well as a high level of intelligence in the care and welfare of their offspring.

recently passed away—and what a marvel this man was! for when fast approaching a centenarian, he might still be seen in the saddle.

He had always a pleasant story to tell, and the writer does not suppose he is the only one who has listened to the following humorous description of a visit he was induced to make, to vary his experience, with a run with the Royal Buckhounds, given in his strong, native, West Country dialect: "Having heard such a lot 'bout the huns wi' the Royal Buck Houles, I was determined to gew up for a day wi' 'em. The meet was neist a pleace called Slough, and a big meet 'twas—tew hunderd hosses or more—and a yeld or tew off was a big van, where they zaid the stag was. Zoon a'ter I zeed 'en jump out, and they hollered out 'Gone away!' like we dew down West; but to my surprise all the hossmen were a'ter 'en in a jiffy, but I stopped wi' the houles, like I always dew, and I bound to zay they picked up the line and hurned purty middlin', but not very vast. A'ter a vew miles we could zee a gurt big crowd a deuce of a ways on, and the huntsman zaid: 'Oh, there they be—they got 'en then,' and zure enough, when we got up, there they was, a gurt ring o' hosses, and the stag in the middle. I zaid: 'Wall, gentlemen, is this a vair sample of yer huns?' and tew or dree zaid: 'Oh, yes! we reckons this a purty gude hurn.' I zaid, 'Gentlemen! dew 'ee come down to Exmoor 'long wi' I, and I'll show 'ee a bit o' real staghunting.'"

G. E. L.



FAR reaching political changes do not always affect the current of social life so notably as did the parliamentary union of England and Scotland in 1706. The union of the crowns a century before had done something to introduce into Scotland the higher standard of living which prevailed in England, but the Scotsman was slow to depart from his austere and uncomfortable ideas of domestic architecture, which grew out of defensive needs. Nor was this unreasonable, because civil and warlike ferment alike poisoned Scotch life during the second quarter of the seventeenth century to a greater degree even than in the England of the Civil War. After the Restoration

Scotland continued to bristle with apprehension for her spiritual freedom. It was not until direct representation of Scotland in the London parliament assured a due consideration of Scottish needs and feelings that Scotsmen at large began to turn from reliance on the arbitrament of the sword. So it was that the Scotch nobility were slow to discard their towers and bartizans, although Sir William Bruce had introduced the Palladian element into his additions to Holyrood Palace about 1670.

By the end of the seventeenth century, however, the *rapprochement* between England and Scotland had become more solid and sincere, and as, moreover, such military ex-

periences as the battering of Borthwick Castle by Cromwell had proved the small protection afforded by stout walls, the defensive element died out of new building. To these changes of attitude Kelburne Castle pays due witness. By a happy chance which came to comparatively few Scotch castles of the sixteenth century, the later additions have been kept distinct. Too often eighteenth century builders and, still worse, architects of the first half of the nineteenth century, have buried the core of ancient work in a mass of later building which has altogether masked it.

It is to be remembered that the renewal of a right appreciation of domestic building traditions came later in Scotland than in England. When it did come the task before the architect was more difficult, because the essence of the Scottish tradition was in its military accent. It was difficult to employ the Baronial manner without reproducing features which had lost their significance in modern life. The problem was to recapture the spirit without too closely following the form, and it can hardly be said that this need has been successfully met until very recent years, or by more than a handful of architects. Enough skill has been developed, however, to make the correction of nineteenth century blunders a safe enterprise when entrusted to those who are faithful students of their native architecture. Fortunately, Kelburne escaped the worst sort of ravages which were so common about eighty years ago,



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ENTRANCE FRONT OF 1700.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



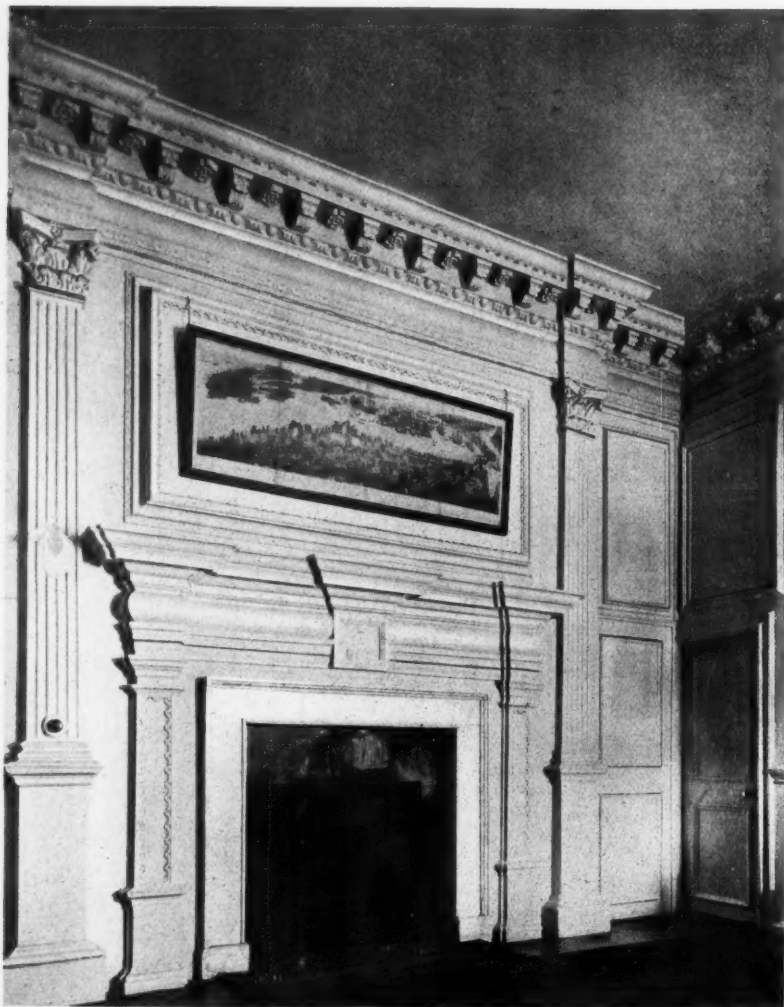
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IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and we are able to study it as an authentic example of two interesting periods in Scottish building.

The date 1581 on the original entrance on the south side of the old building may be regarded as the year when it was finished. As the accompanying plan shows, John Boyle and his wife Marion Crawford of Killbirnie, whose initials were also carved on the lintel, built a typical castle of oblong plan with round corner turrets at the north and south-west



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IN THE SOUTH BEDROOM.

angles. Their home followed, therefore, the typical form of Z plan which gave a house of limited comfort but considerable aptitude for defence. A little more than a century later, in 1692, their descendant, David Boyle, Lord of Kelburne, entered into a contract with Thomas Caldwell, a mason of Billtrees, and it has happily been preserved. Boyle required of the craftsman that he should "build me ane house sufficient," and set out with exactness where the doors were to be, and their size, the number of windows, the laying of flagstones for the entry and other needful details. The employer was to pay "600 merks scotts money," and to "lead (*i.e.*, transport) the haill stones, and to lay by me and sand to his hand." Caldwell was to provide the labour.

The work must have gone slowly, for the entrance doorway of the new block is dated 1700, eight years after the contract was signed, and the lead water pipes and pipe head were evidently not fixed until 1722, as the date upon them sufficiently shows. Rain water leadwork was rare in Scotland at this date, and, indeed, was never used at all freely anywhere north of the Tweed until late in the eighteenth century, and then in few places save Aberdeen, which developed a notable school of artistic plumbing. The coronets, double-headed eagle, and date on Kelburne are therefore worthy of special note. It is obvious that the plumber employed was a man of some enterprise, because there is also a leaden eagle in a recessed panel above the doorway with the motto "Dominus providebat" below it.

An examination of the rooms of the castle suggests that David Boyle must have entered into another contract, which has not survived, with some competent local joiner. We



IN THE BASTILLE ROOM.

may guess that this arrangement (which doubtless covered the refitting of the old castle as well as the new mansion) laid down that the new work should "be conform" with the classical taste of the day, as it was understood in rural Scotland. On the first floor of the older building is a room known as the Bastille Room, perhaps because it once had some special tactical value for defence. It contains a wooden mantelpiece with curiously coarse flat pilasters derived from the twisted shafts so popular earlier in the seventeenth century. There is a greater hint of scholarship in the treatment of the fireplace of the south bedroom, and the detail of the drawing-room is after a pattern

"COUNTRY LIFE."

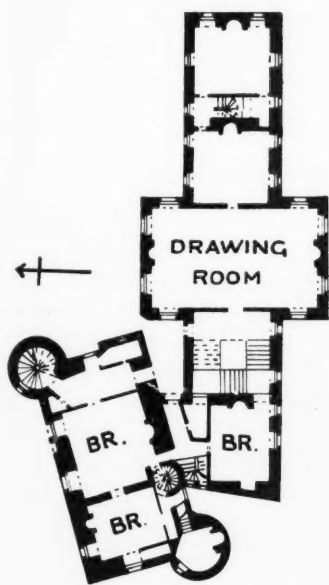
so much more refined that we must ascribe it either to a later date or to a specially skilful hand. The design of



LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CHAIRS.

the cornice and frieze is particularly rich and effective. Boyle doubtless refurnished his house at the same time and the chairs of Caroline type now illustrated were perhaps of his collecting, but most of his gear disappeared before waves of a later taste, which, indeed, affected the fabric of the castle in no small measure. One of our pictures shows the charming setting of the castle at the foot of the Kilbirnie Hills, with the burn running down the glen on its north side, and there are more formal elements in its environment which will attract garden lovers.

Kelburne boasts two fine sundials of the elaborate many-dialled type which Scotland yielded so profusely. One is set in the midst of a round pool; the other, now illustrated, stands on a stepped base. Its total height is 8ft. 6in., and the



PLAN OF PRINCIPAL FLOOR.

composition consists of a square shaft surmounted by a capital on which stands an obelisk. Its most unusual feature, however, is the very beautiful wrought iron vane, the swinging flag of which consists of an entwined and coroneted monogram of David Boyle, Earl of Glasgow, and his wife. At the top of the spindle is a Scottish thistle. A few years ago this delicate work was found to have suffered much by rust, and it has been carefully repaired. The date on the stone-work is 1707, and the sundial was evidently put up to commemorate the Union. The total number of dials is a hundred and six, not, it is true, the greatest number known, but sufficient to show the extreme ingenuity of the diallers of those days.

The present holder of the title follows the sea, and won the Distinguished Service Order for services last year in the



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FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

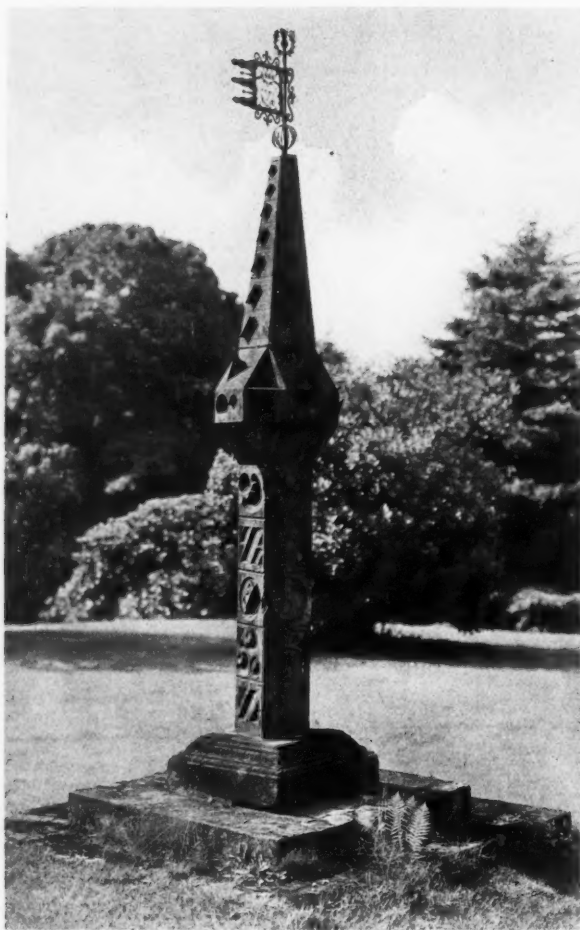
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KELBURNE FROM THE BURN.

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Copyright. A SUNDIAL AT KELBURNE. "C.L."

Persian Gulf. In this he carries on a tradition, for the late Earl, whom he succeeded only a few months ago, was a captain in the Royal Navy, served in the White Sea in 1854 during the Russian War, and wore the medal and clasp for the Chinese Campaign of 1857. LAWRENCE WEAVER.

SOUTH AFRICAN HOSPITAL, RICHMOND PARK

SITUATED in what is, perhaps, London's most beautiful oasis is the South African Hospital, which consists of hutments of wood with Euralite fireproof interior. The site was graciously granted by H.M. the King, and a fund was started by several prominent members of the British South African Community in London. The site chosen is upon a gentle slope just within the Star and Garter Gate. Major Thornton, who is in command of the Hospital, has very kindly given me a few particulars regarding it, which will be interesting not only to those who are connected with South Africa in any way, but to the general public who are interested in anything which will further the comfort, well-being and curative treatment of the men who have come back from South Africa to place their services at the disposal of their country with that loyalty which has distinguished every British Colony.

The hospital at present consists of three hundred beds, but it has been so planned that an extension up to seven hundred and fifty beds, or even one thousand, is not only possible, but easy, and all the arrangements for water, lighting, cooking, etc., have been formed to facilitate this. There is a fine central corridor off which the wards open, and in the foyer of the corridor there is a collection of horns, South African waterbuck, eland, etc., which breaks the monotony of the grey walls. Prominent among these are the horns of a springbok, which, while it was alive, was the mascot of the South Africans. Unfortunately, this animal fell a prey to the teeth of a marauding dog, but his memory has been perpetuated by the horns, which now grace the grey walls. Each of the wards is 110ft. long by 20ft. wide, and these are heated by three slow combustion coke stoves. Adjoining each ward is a sanitary annexe,

ward kitchen, small room for the sister, and a small isolation ward. The flooring of the wards is of a restful grey coloured linoleum.

Among the named wards one is the gift of the Victoria League of South Africa, and another was given by the Cape of Good Hope Red Cross. There are two operating theatres, which have the latest appliances in every way. The walls of the theatres are of Euralite painted with Paripan. The lighting of the theatres is on what is termed the Lino Electric Lighting System. At the top of the ceiling all round the room is a series of tubes about a foot long, each of which is an electric lamp, and when these are turned on a very ample but not glaring light is shed over the entire theatre. The theatres are heated by radiators, and there is a large sterilising room between the two where all theatre dressings are sterilised; but there is another room outside in a separate hut in which all other dressings are sterilised. The theatres have outside dust-proof blinds. There is a good sized anaesthetising room adjoining the theatres. I was much struck by the cleanliness and order which prevailed; and it is no easy matter to keep a hut hospital in apple pie order.

Not far from the theatres is a complete pathological laboratory, and in a separate and commodious room there is an ophthalmic, ear, nose and throat department. There is a fully equipped X-ray department in which useful work is being done, and the records obtained here will no doubt be of great value in the medical statistics of the great war when published later.

The corridors of the entire hospital are covered, as has been said, with a restful grey lino, having at one side a broad strip of cocoanut matting. It seemed odd that this matting should not have been placed in the centre of the corridor, but it was explained that it was put on one side in order to facilitate the free passage of stretcher and other trolleys to the theatres and elsewhere.

Another complete department, which in the present war has been found of such great value in military and other hospitals dealing with war patients, is the massage and electro-therapeutic room. There is a battery of eight fine bathrooms together, each bath being screened from the other by a curtain of green Willesden canvas. At one end of the battery is a room known as the "dirty" room, in which the patient leaves his soiled clothing. He then enters the bath and, after his ablutions, proceeds to what is known as the "clean" room at the other end of the battery, where he finds his outfit of clean linen awaiting him.

In the large and airy kitchen for the wards and dining-room there are five Sawyer stoves, heated by gas, six capacious ovens, a boiling table with various sized rings for different sized pots, and two steam cookers for potatoes, which turn out the complete article in something like twelve minutes. The floor of the kitchen is rough tiled. Just outside the kitchen are various pantries and a large scullery with the necessary sinks and appliances for cleaning soiled crockery. The water supply is local, and in order to facilitate the distribution at all points of the building a water tower has been erected to which water is pumped up by a large automatic electric pump. The water tower is 60ft. high, and beneath it is a tank in which the water is stored, and it is then pumped up to the tower tank which contains 40,000 gallons.

There is a complete fire installation with hydrants, and a very powerful electric pump, which ensures great pressure of water. There are altogether three electric pumps in the engine room, one for the hydrants, one for the water tower and one for the hot water circulation. There is a fine dining-room, which can accommodate 130 at a time. The size of this room is 50ft. by 20ft. The patients are fed in two relays. Off this is a servery, hot plates, tea boiler, etc. The grey walls are enlivened by various beautiful pictures of South African subjects, and on each table is a large glass containing beautiful flowers, the gifts of those interested in the Hospital. There is a very fine recreation room, which contains a full-sized billiard table, excellent piano and many tables with writing materials for the use of the patients. In addition to this recreation room there is what is called the Day Room, and this has been made after the pattern of a typical South African bungalow with stoep.

Outside the main building are the officers' quarters, with an excellent mess-room and separate kitchen, and adjoining this is the sergeants' mess. All the nurses on the staff are South African, and most of the V.A.D.'s are also South African. The nurses are accommodated in five separate huts apart from the main building, having a charming common room, with a spacious verandah in front of it. It is interesting to note that in the culinary department all the operators are women.

The hospital was intended chiefly for men who have come home from South Africa to join the Imperial Forces, but this rule is, of course, relaxed when there is pressure of bed space, and men of any branch of the Forces are accommodated in the Hospital. Many amusements are provided for the men—motor drives and river trips being prominent among these, and the men are allowed to roam in Richmond Park, which is a tremendous boon. As the beauties of the Park are so well known they need no commendation from me.

The architect of the Hospital was Mr. Allison, of the Board of Works, and Mr. Robertson, of the Furnishing Department of the Office of Works, superintended the furnishing. One could scarcely imagine a better site or more charming surroundings for war-worn heroes, whose recovery from wounds and disease must, of necessity, be hastened by the pure air, the greenery of the Park, so restful to the eye weary of the monotonous mud and dirt of the trenches; no noise of great guns here to jar the ear and rack the nerves; no sound save the song of the nightingale, the gentle hoot of the owl, and the morning twitter of the lesser songsters breaks the peaceful silence of the Park.

Surgical treatment has made very rapid strides in development in the present war, and many ingenious devices and appliances have been invented. Some of these are the products of laymen, particularly as regards splints, extension apparatus and bedrests. Many, of course, have been found wanting after prolonged and practical trial, while others have "come to stay." When I say that many have been invented by laymen I mean, of course, that they have carried out the main suggestions of professional men, but by their intimate knowledge of carpentry they have been able to improve on the original idea.

Crutches have been improved; one form in particular, the invention of a country practitioner, has proved a great boon, doing away largely with the trouble known as crutch paralysis, and is freely in use in military hospitals.

Various solutions not used to any extent before the present war have been tried with signal success, perhaps the most used being Liq. Sodæ Chlorinatae for dressing septic wounds, bedsores, etc. Eusol in strength from 1-10 to 40,000 for bladder irrigation, etc., has been found most useful in obstinate cases of cystitis.

GERALD ANSTRUTHER YORKE.

THE BROWN MARE:

A STUDY IN TWO PARTS

BY ALFRED OLLIVANT.

PART I.

HE used to bring her home when he came on his winter's leave in the years before the war to hunt with the South Down, for she was an unusually fine performer across country. And it was there I met her. A tall upstanding creature, sixteen hands and over, very high at the withers, not quite clean bred, and yet showing breeding in every line. She did not really carry bone enough for the heavy Wealden clay, in which your horse sinks up to his hocks at every stride; but the Major was clearly always pleased when the big iron-grey Granite had strained a sinew and he could fall back on the mare for an extra day. And little sturdy Humbleton, the very British groom with the blue eyes, the chestnut hair and stolid way, was just the same. When exercising, he always rode the mare for preference and led the grey. She was honest and she was kind, with the heart of a woman and the manners of a lady. Yet except for a general air of breeding, I do not think you would have singled her out in a crowd.

Kitty came first into the Major's stable when, after a long spell at the War Office, he went back to regimental work and took over the command of a field battery. I think he picked her out of the ranks. Maybe the trumpeter had been riding her. In that stable other horses came and went. The mare stayed, and her reputation grew.

At the big Aldershot meeting the Major entered her for the Artillery Point-to-Point. He was never hard on his horses and did not ride her out. She was not placed. Afterwards he heard the whole brigade had been backing her.

When the Major got his Jacket and took command of the Black Horse Battery at the Wood, Humbleton and the mare went with him. She was not black; she was brown. Therefore he could not ride her on ceremonial parades as his first charger. So he bought a sporting little black horse with a short back, Dandy by name, on which he rode with nodding plume at the head of his troop down Park Lane, across Piccadilly and the Mall, to fire salutes on the Horse Guards Parade. But if she was no longer his first charger she was still first in his heart, and for long days on Salisbury Plain during autumn manœuvres she had not her equal.

There followed three quiet years of preparation, the Black Horse Battery doing the Musical Drive at Olympia, swirling at the gallop in rhythmic figures about the famous bronze Gundamuck gun which the troop had lost when covering the retreat from Cabul in the first Afghan War and recovered forty years later in the second. The battery drove to the admiration of connoisseurs, artists and the London crowd; and then would march down to Salisbury Plain to break records there in the mimic business of war.

Then came the reality, and the Major had to make the sacrifice of his life and break up in a moment the fighting unit which through three laborious years he had trained to the point of perfection. Immediately on mobilisation he was called upon to send all his horses, all his men and half his officers to complete the strength of a first-for-service battery at Aldershot. He stood with folded arms on the barrack square and watched his famous black teams, shining in the sun, and beloved of Londoners, file out of the gate. The subalterns said they thought the

Major's heart would break. It was perhaps a little comfort to him that when horses and men arrived at Aldershot the Major of the first-for-service battery there asked his own gun team drivers to give place to the newcomers. "These are the drivers of the Black Horse Troop," he said.

The only men left the Major were Humbleton and his batman; the only horses Dandy and the mare. For the rest he had his guns, his non-commissioned officers, a couple of subalterns, reservists, and the pick of all the horses that were streaming into London with which to build up a new battery.

He had two months in which to do it, and he did it. In those days there was no tarrying. The Germans were knocking at the Gate of Calais.

At the beginning of October the Black Horse Battery, its horses no longer black, many coloured, many cornered, but a hard and handy crowd, disembarked at Zeebrugge with the 7th Division in the romantic and desperate endeavour to relieve Antwerp, and the officers of the Guards Brigade to which the battery was attached muttered among themselves that if it was no longer the battery of Olympia days, it was still the best horse battery in England.

Antwerp fell the day they landed. The Immortal Division, 20,000 strong, marched out to meet the enemy much as David went to meet Goliath. In a perilously thin drawn out line it flung itself across the path of the German herds driving bull-headed, hundreds of thousands of them, for the sea and the island that lay across the Channel.

General French sent word to the valiant division that he would reinforce them in five hours. Those reinforcements took five days to come. But the division held, though at the end of the stress it had but forty officers left out of the four hundred who had disembarked at Zeebrugge six weeks before.

In those tremendous days the Black Horse Battery played its fiery part in support of the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards. Tried in that white-hot furnace, Guardsmen and gunners proved worthy of each other and of the traditions of their great regiments. There was no rest by night or day for officers, men or horses.

Kitty the mare took it all very calmly. Back with the limbers, on the sheltered side of the ridge on which the guns were barking, she stretched her long neck, bowed a knee, and grazed the Flemish turf at ease much as on Salisbury Plain. The hubbub across the ridge, her master's fierce peremptory voice, the occasional burst of shrapnel near by, disturbed her little.

Now and then the trumpeter, handing over the mare and his own horse to the care of Humbleton, would crawl to the top of the ridge and watch the battery in action beyond, pounding away at the grey-coats struggling in the valley. He did not see much, for the guns were roughly dug in. But once he saw a farmhouse which the Major was using for an observation post crash down in headlong ruin.

"Gosh!" muttered the trumpeter. "Spotted 'im. He's done."

Then the long, lean Major came running out of the dust and *débris*.

The trumpeter returned at the trot to his horses.

"Old man ain't 'alf nippy," he reported to Humbleton.
 "He ain't so old neether, then," answered Humbleton, who took no liberties with his master himself and allowed none.

"Ain't he, then?" retorted the trumpeter, who must have the last word even in the mouth of Hell. "I'll lay he's older nor he were twenty year ago, then."

Once on that last desperate day, when the one skeleton Cavalry Brigade, held in reserve, was dashing here and there to make good as best it might gaps in the broken line, the Major got his guns up under a wall to cover the Guards' counter-attack launched as a forlorn hope. The Germans saw him and swept the wall away with a tidal wave of fire.

It was—*Rear limber up!* and the gun teams came up at the gallop.

In the hubbub and tumult of shells, shouts, of gunners furiously handling gun wheels, of drivers with outstretched whip-hands quieting their teams, of bloody men disengaging bloody and floundering horses, Kitty the mare was steady as a rock.

"Got her, sir?" gasped the trumpeter, as he toppled off his own horse, spewing blood.

"Right," said the Major, toe in his stirrup, and swung into his saddle. "*Battery column gallop!*"

And somehow or other the battery swung clear.

Those were astounding days. For three weeks the officers and men of that battery never had their clothes off, and for days together the horses were never unharnessed. But, whoever else went short, Kitty the mare never suffered. Humbleton saw to that, and to be just, the mare saw to herself in her large and sensible way, grazing when opportunity offered, and snatching *bonnes bouches* from ruined haystacks.

After the first terrible six weeks the armies settled down to trench warfare. It was not the game for horse artillery; but the Black Horse Battery played it with zest all through that first winter. The horses stood out in the open and thrived. Kitty grew a coat like a bear's, and the saddle sank into her back as into a drift of brown snow. But campaigning suited her as it did her black companion, Dandy.

Then came promotion. The Major, now a Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, took command of a Field Artillery Brigade. That did not last for long. Within a few weeks he and Humbleton and the two horses were back with the Horse Artillery, the Colonel now commanding a brigade.

PART II.

The headquarters of the brigade was in a château some thirty miles behind the firing line. When the turn of the cavalry division to which the brigade was attached came for a spell in the trenches, horses and guns made a long forced march by night and took up their positions early in December of the second winter of the war. They had three months in the trenches—months of sleet and rain, of dogged endurance infinitely dull, varied by lurid nightmare interludes. When towards the end of February they were relieved, nobody in the Division regretted it. That was the time of the heavy snows and all reliefs were made of necessity at night.

The Horse Artillery started for the thirty mile trek home at midnight, the long thin line of guns, their wheels thick with snow, trailing worm-like through the white dimness that muffled the noise of their going and made the procession strangely ghost-like. Wagons and kits were to follow later. The Colonel gave his brigade an hour's start. It was just one o'clock when his batman came to the door of his much-shelled lodging and announced that Humbleton and the horses were outside. The Colonel, busy destroying papers, went to the door accompanied by his terrier, Bruiser. The little groom in his goat-skin coat stood outside in the snow, the horses in hand. Dandy stretched a neck to greet his little friend the terrier, standing three-legged, and shivering in the snow, while the mare nibbled tentatively at a pile of wood close by.

"Don't let her eat that!" ordered the Colonel, ferociously.

He always spoke to his servants as if they were his mortal enemies and he wished them to know he knew it. And they took more from him than they would have done from many a man with a smoother tongue and a smaller heart. It was just the old man's way, they said among themselves. And he had the qualities which ensured respect if they did not win love. He was just, consistent, and in the heart of him, considerate. So, to the surprise of many, they always stuck to him.

The Colonel went back to his room with Bruiser and piled on layer upon layer of clothes—sweaters, hunting waistcoats, Norfolk jackets, towards the top a suit of oilskins and over all a Burberry. In multitudinous pockets he stuffed an electric torch, a flask, a thermos, a map, a ball of string, an extra pair of gloves, a muffler, and other odds and ends. The lean Colonel, now a very portly man, gave certain curt instructions to his batman, tied Bruiser, who was to follow with the kits, to the leg of the table, and mounted Dandy; for he knew of old that the mare was not clever in the snow. Then he set off into the night, Humbleton and the mare following in his wake.

Once clear of the village the Colonel looked round. In that little distance he had already gained greatly on the other pair. He waved for the groom to come up alongside.

"Leg her up," he ordered gruffly. "Keep her alongside me."

Side by side master and man rode along through the night, the snow coating them heavily.

"She's walking abominably," said the Colonel.

"Yes, sir," answered Humbleton, who never wasted words, least of all on his master.

Laboriously the Colonel disengaged his electric torch and flashed it on the mare. What he saw he did not like. The snow was heavy on her shoulders, thick in her ears, plastering her heavy coat, and she was slouching along disconsolately, her head down as though smelling out a track. "It's that wood's poisoned her," thought the Colonel, but he didn't say anything.

"Does she feel all right?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," answered Humbleton.

Twelve miles out they stopped at a little *estaminet* for a water and feed. Dandy tucked into his nosebag greedily. The mare would not look at hers.

"Come on, missus," said Humbleton.

He warmed some water, making a weak gruel, sprinkled bran on the top, and held the bucket to her nostrils temptingly. She breathed on it, her breath mingling with the steam, but would not touch it. The Colonel walked round her with anxious eyes, pulled her ears, hand-rubbed her cold pasterns. "It's that wood," he thought. Then he rummaged in his multitudinous pockets. After long search he produced a thermometer and took her temperature. It was 103°, and there was still a twenty-mile march before them. He got her a ball and gave it to her. There was no stabling at the *estaminet*, and nothing for it, therefore, but to go on.

He swung into his saddle again. The track lay before them invisible save for the half-obliterated furrows left by the gun-wheels. The snow came waving across them in white curtains that almost seemed to lighten the darkness. The moustaches of both men froze and were thatched with snow. The two white-cloaked figures laboured along side by side like two phantom horsemen with feet of lead. The mare seemed to come along a little better.

Every now and then the Colonel said: "How's she feel now?"

And Humbleton answered: "Very queer, sir."

At length they came to the foot of a long bare ridge stretching interminably before them, smooth and bleak and white as a shroud; great curtains of snow flapping dismally across its desolate face. The mare stopped. Both men dismounted. The Colonel with a hoof-pick, disengaged with difficulty from a remote interior pocket, emptied her hoofs of the balling snow. He thought she was going to lie down, and once she lay down on that slope he knew he would never get her up again. He and Humbleton, crouching in the snow, hand-rubbed her legs and flanks. Then they started leading her up the slope. The two men were wonderfully kind and patient with the suffering creature, far more kind and patient with her than with each other.

The forlorn little group toiled desolately up the slope, now engulfed in a billow of waving white, now emerging into blotted dimness, the wind rollicking away with terrible laughter in the valley below. The horses, with windy tails tucked in and strewn about their flanks, plodded on with downward heads, shaking the snow from their ears like big dogs with a rattle of accoutrements that sounded weirdly in the night. Honest and kind as always, the mare was doing her dumb best, and both knew it. One on either side, they shouldered her up the slope, easing her, halting her, talking to her, coaxing her on a step at a time, as a nurse teaching a child to walk. And every now and then she rubbed her snowy head against one man or the other, as though recognising their love, and wishing to tell them about it. Somehow or other they bolstered her up to the top of that ridge of windy death. Down in the valley, on the other side, the Colonel hoped he might find a cavalry division, and some shelter for the mare.

He was right. As they descended the slope, the mare walking more easily, they found themselves among friends. The gunners were in possession of the valley. Officers and men with lanterns came to the rescue. Most of them knew the Colonel, many of them the mare. A veterinary surgeon was found and pulled out of his reluctant bed. The mare was given a roomy box in a farm. She revived somewhat. Willing hands bedded her down in bracken. Humbleton set to work to warm and dry her. The Colonel took her temperature and found it less. The light was just stealing over the white-bosomed hills and snow-thatched roofs when he swung into the saddle to ride the last long stage to his headquarters alone. The mare was playing with some hay, and Humbleton was rugging her up as he left her.

All that day he was busy, and no news came through; but a horse of his orderly officer's died partly from exposure and partly from eating wood, the veterinary surgeon said. Next morning early the Colonel rode off to the valley where the mare was to see how things were going. As he rode up to the yard of the farm, Humbleton, looking in his goat-skin like a little clean-shaven Robinson Crusoe, came ploughing through the snow to meet him. He looked very dogged and did not catch the Colonel's eye.

"Well?" said the Colonel.

"Mare's dead, sir," answered the little man.

"Indeed!" said the Colonel rudely. "What time?"

"Two o'clock this morning."

The Colonel said nothing and dismounted. Heavily he walked through the slush of the farmyard towards the loose-box and entered. Honest and kind in death as in life, the brown mare lay on her side, rough of coat, her long, flat neck stretched out, her long, thin legs slightly crooked, her shoes upturned and shining, looking strangely pathetic. Over her head Humbleton had scrawled in chalk upon a beam:

*Kitty:
Died for her country,
1 March, 1916.*

The Colonel stood above her. He was glad she had such a thick bed of bracken to rest upon. Then he bent and felt her heart to make sure. One of those strange and overwhelming waves of emotion of which we cannot trace the origin came surging up out of the inland ocean of his being and choked him. He kicked the bracken about with his feet and blew his nose.

Then he said: "We shall miss her, Humbleton."

The little groom, standing in his goat-skin jacket in the door, his back towards his master, looked out over the snow and answered nothing.

HOW TO HOLD RECLAIMED WASTE

"A CLINKING good crop of wheat"—that was the verdict of a practical East Anglian husbandman, agent for an estate, owner of land himself, tenant, too, of several farms, an energetic, clever, successful man with the blood of several generations of East Anglian farmers running in his veins. He had waded into the honey coloured ripening wheat and looked at its heavy, well filled ears erect on long, vigorous stalks. "There's no denying it to be a clinking good crop," he replied to a landowner who was puzzled that the desert, so to speak, should be more fruitful than the sown.

Breks still coming up in it, too! The skilled eye caught them at once. Yes, they were shown in our photographs. In fact, Dr. Edwards particularly requested that the photographs should be taken where they could be plainly seen. The landowner grew thoughtful. Oat stooks on a stubble as clean as a well kept kitchen also drew forth the encomium, "a clinking crop." But the potatoes? Dr. Edwards had "groused" about them. "Weren't fully grown; hadn't come up as well as could be expected"—he was a dismal pessimist. "May we turn up a root to see?" they asked, not perhaps fully realising the honesty and modesty of the man who would never forgive himself were he to raise a false expectation. Reluctantly, as it appeared, he agreed, and the earth was pushed aside to disclose a crop of those giants which in good clubs and restaurants they serve baked in their jackets. Seeing is believing. There could be no scepticism about the results obtained so far. On that great level field which in the year before the war broke out was a waste of bracken the results fronted the eye in wheat turning gold ripe, in oats waiting to be carted, in lucerne green and ready for its fourth cut, in peas and mangolds. It led to a quiet, searching and practical conversation of which the following is a brief epitome.

HOW TO MAINTAIN AND INCREASE FERTILITY.

The soil is coarse sand containing a certain amount of humus, but not enough.

The imperative need is to increase the water retaining power of the soil. A convincing illustration of this was to be seen in the crops of an adjacent farm, where, in spite of the wet season, the gravelly spots showed unmistakable signs of scalding, while the surrounding sand was producing a crop above the average.

SUGGESTIONS AND OBJECTIONS.

The suggestion made by the local farmers of light land was that of following oats or other cereals with a turnip crop on which sheep were to be folded.

The chief objection to this was the statement of a most experienced Norfolk cultivator that only when the price of mutton was exceptionally high could the returns from the flock be made to meet the expense of the turnip cultivation. Further, mutton, etc., is removed and the equivalent not returned.

SECOND OBJECTION.

Folding is extended over a long period. It was stated that a flock of about three hundred and fifty sheep manure, by folding, half an acre a day. The practice is to let the flock graze in daylight and put it in the turnip fold at night. Thus the sheep dung on the early fed turnips lies exposed to the wasting effects of sun, rain and wind till the folding is completed. In valuation the time when folding begins is commonly taken into account. The practice of folding before December is not considered economical, and early sowing of winter cereals is now considered the best. For these reasons it cannot be considered that the local practice is satisfactory.

AN ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTION.

An alternative to this is the sowing of a leguminous green crop, to be ploughed in before the autumn sowing of

cereals. The plants most generally used in Belgium for the purpose are serradella and yellow lupins. The advantage of using the latter lies in the fact that their early growth is flat on the soil, so that if sown as the corn crop is just coming into ear, they are practically untouched by the mower and afterwards grow lustily, always provided that the manuring for the real crop has been done with a view to the green-manuring crop. Serradella also remains low, but is sown much earlier; April is not too soon. An advantage of serradella is that, instead of being ploughed, it can be folded in the late autumn if this is required.

Dr. Edwards made the objection that there is not enough moisture in the soil to maintain two crops at once, but the lupins are sown at the end of the cereal growth, when the corn requires less water. The first lupin root goes straight down and is therefore able to resist the drought.

THE PRESENT SITUATION.

It is now too late in the season to sow lupins, and it will be interesting to watch the means taken by Dr. Edwards to maintain and increase the fertility of the soil. He succeeded in doing so in his Suffolk experiment, which went on for a dozen years, and he will no doubt do so here.

The problem arises chiefly in regard to a very fine crop of oats in stook at the time of our visit. It is the Black Tartarian variety, by far the most suitable for his sandy soil. The crop is exceptionally good, but one has only to consider the long thick straw and full ears to realise what a great exportation from the soil will have occurred when the produce is carted and taken away. How to replace this is the problem now to be solved.

First-rate Norfolk cultivators of light land who speak from family tradition and their own experience readily admitted that the oats, like the wheat, were "a clinking crop." A better crop than any that had been shown the writer on good and long-cultivated farmland. They made no attempt to conceal their surprise at the results, and were still more astonished when, in answer to eager questions as to what had gone before, they were told potatoes. "And what before potatoes?" "Bracken," replied Dr. Edwards, dryly.

But still the doubting Thomas, who is always to be found when you scratch a farm, rejoiced that it was due to the rotten flag of the second year. Now comes the question, What is best to be done to set their doubts at rest? Yellow lupins or serradella would, in our opinion, have supplied the better answer, but for them it is too late. Still, the resources of civilisation are not exhausted. There are several choices. In any case the first thing is to plough up the stubble, which shows scarcely a weed, save at long intervals a little weak twitch or the shy and attenuated frond of a brek that has survived the smothering of the oats.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS.

- I. Game laws should be modified.
- II. Leguminous crops for bringing humus, retaining moisture and adding nitrogen.
- III. Shelter belts to prevent excess of evaporation.
- IV. Use of nitrate and salt in suitable crops in order to retain moisture in the soil.
- V. Thin sowing and keeping the soil clear of weeds.

GAME LAWS.

It is unfortunate that the "brek" country is also a favourite sporting district. Estates frequently change hands and the soil is exposed to great changes of treatment according as the owner is more intent on agriculture or sport. Also its value fluctuates in accordance with the purpose to which it is put. One landowner told the writer of a piece of land which he and his Lailiff had vainly tried for several years

to bring into profitable cultivation. They gave it up in despair. From an agricultural point of view the land was only of prairie value. Had it been sold for purposes of reclamation, £4 an acre would have been an outside price. Yet a purchaser who wanted it for sport cheerfully gave three times that amount.

On another estate of 4,000 acres the rental value for agriculture is £500, but the annual shooting value before the war was £2,000. As the owner acquired it with a clear understanding of these relative possibilities, it would be unfair to mulct him of a fairly acquired value. These facts should be looked frankly in the face. Landowners have ever been as a class highly patriotic, and would be the first to recognise that England

cannot afford to let so much land lie in waste as there has been. Rabbits are the worst enemy, alike of the farmer and the forester, and about them a landowner, who is a great sportsman and whose name is as familiar as household words, wrote to us in a private letter a few days ago: "What we regard with most apprehension is the probability of a plague of rabbits. With nearly all trappers gone to the Army, they—the rabbits—are multiplying at an alarming rate." This would necessitate very energetic measures being taken in either a sporting or agricultural county. But it would be best to appoint a small but efficient Commission for the purpose of delineating the frontier between sport and cultivation. It would enable us to avoid friction in the time to come.

P. A. G.

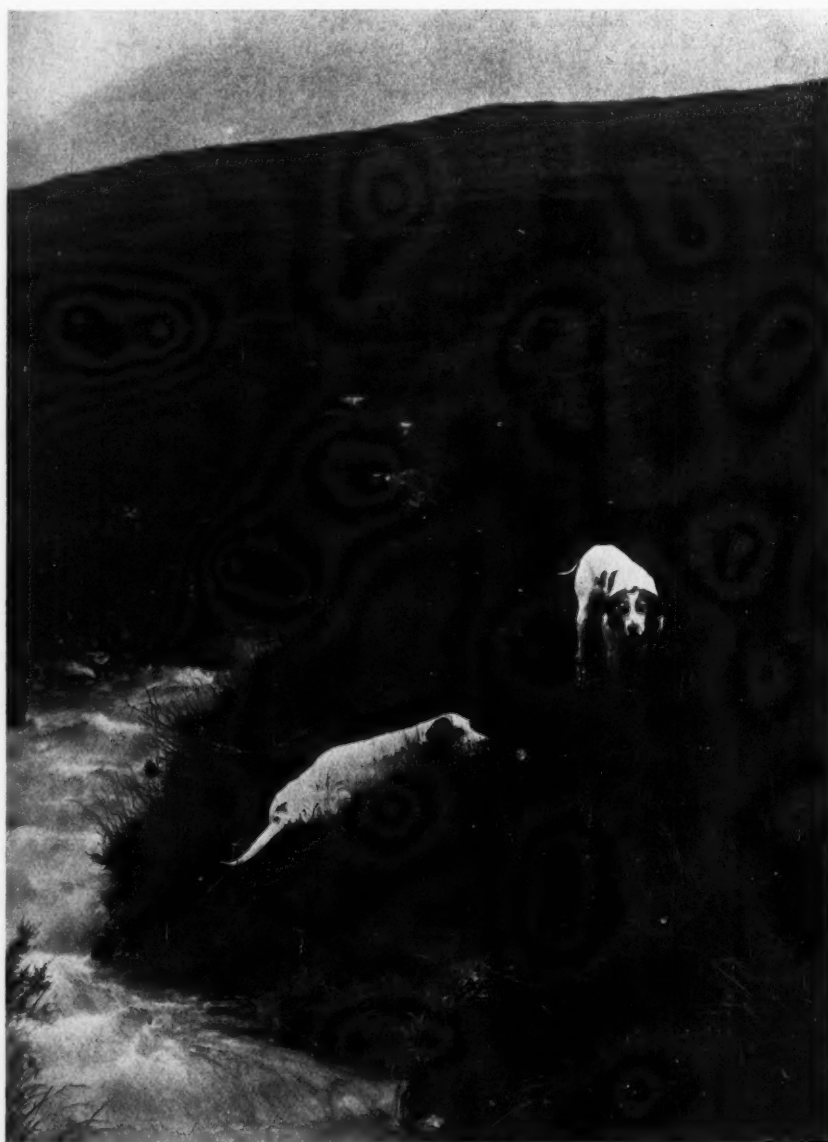
SHOOTING OVER DOGS

HAVE you ever shot over dogs of your own breaking? If you have not, it is almost to be said that you have never known the best fun and keenest interest that shooting is able to offer you. It is nearly sure that your answer will have to be in the negative. Comparatively few men to-day have shot over pointers and setters at all. Still fewer have broken their sporting dogs themselves. Yet both the one and the other are likely to be done more in the immediate future than they have been in the past. It is a conclusion towards which the war is impelling us along two different lines by its various effects. In the first place, it has taken from us all the usual army of beaters by which we drove game to the gun; wherefore it becomes necessary for the gun to go after the game. And, in the second place, it is certain that as a result of the war we shall have a large number of wounded or invalided country gentlemen who will not be capable of pursuing pastimes that demand much athletic vigour. For their enforced leisure and spare time there cannot be a more pleasant occupation than the breaking of dogs, and I am very sure that, once they have begun to shoot over dogs that they have broken for themselves, they will not care very much about shooting over dogs that others, whether amateurs or professionals, have broken for them. And not only is it far more amusing and interesting to watch your own canine pupils putting into practice the lessons that you have taught them; it is also very much more

satisfactory, for the simple reason that the dogs will work so much better and with so much more intelligence of what is wanted of them for the man who has trained them than for the stranger. It has often surprised me that shooters show such little appreciation of this, which surely ought to be quite an obvious fact.

The dog with which we have been most familiar in the field for a good many years is the retriever, and again and again we have heard a man say in an injured tone, "I bought such and such a dog from such and such a man. It would work very well for him, but it won't do what I tell it. It seems to be a perfect fool." But the fact is that it is the

man, not the dog, that is the fool to expect the same readiness and obedience. It is all very well for us to learn the same words, such as "Down charge," "Seek," "To heel," and so on, as signals to our dogs, but we have to remember that the dog has learnt to associate the actions required of him at the call of these phrases, not as a man does, by attention to the words and to their sense in human speech, but by the general sounds and often by some significant gesture accompanying them. And though we may all use the same words, the sound of our voices must differ very widely. We know that they differ. So, in fact, we are expecting the dog to perform a certain action in obedience to a signal which is to its ears, and possibly also to its eyes quite a different one from that in response to which it has been



C. Reid.

A DEAD POINT.

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taught to act thus. The wonder to me is always that the dog understands and obeys as readily as it does signals which must sound so differently to it, rather than that it does not in every instance give them equally quick and full obedience. Really, if a dog passes from one man to another, he has to learn a whole new set of signals, caninely speaking. It

is like a man learning a new language. And for no master will a dog ever work so cheerfully or so sagaciously as for the master whom it has known from its puppyhood and who gave it its first lessons. Why should not each of us who is a shooter and a country dweller have the advantage, as well as the interest, of being such a master of the dogs which are to work for us? There is nothing secret or mysterious about the business of dog breaking. There are excellent books teaching one how to do it. It behoves me most particularly to abstain from recommending one of them above others, for the simple reason that it was my father who, in the first half of the last century, wrote what I believe I may still claim to be the best book on the subject. He broke his own dogs, by the light of nature and common sense, with wonderfully good results; and I am in hopes that I acquired some little gleam of his wisdom. But the root of the matter is really so obvious and plain that it is hardly worth insisting on. Still, it may be mentioned, if only for the reason that we so very often see men treating their dogs in diametrical opposition to it. The secret is to try to put yourself on every occasion into the dog's point of view. Try to think how the situation and the signals that you are going to give him for his guidance in it are likely to be appealing to his canine mind. If you can put the situation clearly before him it is not at all probable that you will have any difficulty in inducing him to act in it as you desire. If you have his affection and have taught him that obedience is the best policy—an absolutely essential first lesson—then he will wish, no less than you, to do what you want. The trouble is to get

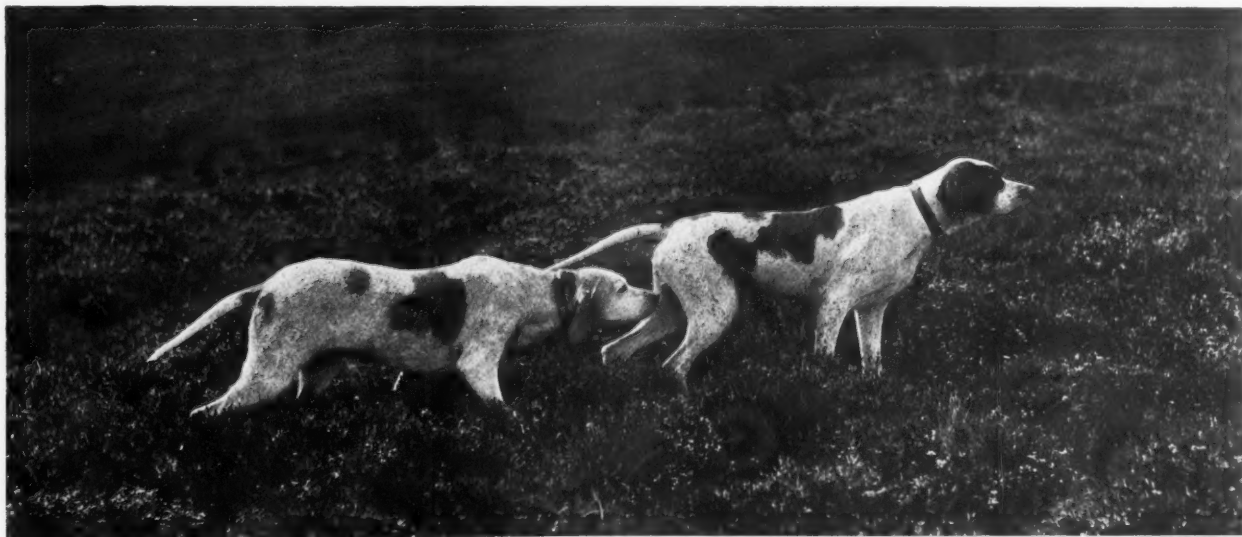


WAITING.

the lessons. Some dogs will stand, and even require, a severity of punishment which would utterly frighten and break the spirit of others. In any case punishment should be given as sparingly as possible; but when you are, most reluctantly, obliged to punish a dog, it is a mistake to be too soft-hearted with him or to let him have any doubt of its being a disagreeable business. Above all, you must never lose your temper with him. If you do so lose it in a moment of overhaste, you may ruin the work of weeks; may, perhaps, ruin him as a servant for life. Wherefore the breaking of dogs is an excellent exercise for the master, as well as for the pupil, if it is brought to a successful end.

This, however, is not by any means intended as an essay on dog breaking, which is a matter requiring far more scope than is given here. But it is just as well that the shooter should recognise that, as a result of the shortage of human hands caused by the war, the pointer and the setter are coming back to something more like their old honourable status again as man's helpers on moor and field and covert. There will be more shooting over dogs. Perhaps people will begin to realise how much of possible amusement they have lost in past years from not making more use of them. And they should realise, too, that if in a general sense you find an interest in watching dogs work, it is an interest which is increased fourfold if the workers have been taught by yourself, and, moreover, that they will do the work a very great deal better under the guidance of the voice and hand which they know and which they are in the habit of obeying.

H. G. HUTCHINSON.



C. Reid

BRED IN THE BONE.

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LITERATURE

A BOOK OF THE WEEK

Political and Literary Essays, by the Earl of Cromer. Third Series. (Macmillan.)

THERE is occasionally advantage to be gained by delaying the notice of a book. This is emphatically true of Lord Cromer's essays. When writing them he was groping his way dimly through a situation which had not yet developed on clear and certain lines. Thus he was thrown back upon his unparalleled experience as a diplomat of the East. There is no one in England whose life has to such a large extent been spent among the peoples of the Orient, and Lord Cromer has come particularly into contact with Egypt and Turkey. In view of the attack made on the Suez Canal last week, it is most interesting to turn again to what he has written about the Near East. Interest for the moment is divided between Austria and Turkey. Behind both stands Germany, and we recall the saying about Prince Bismarck that when two persons mount on one horse, one must ride behind. Germany is not likely to be that one. Since the pressure of the Allies began to be seriously felt, it has been seen that the Kaiser has made a most strenuous effort to, as it were, snatch the bridle out of Austria's hand. The appointment of Hindenburg to be *generalissimo* on the Austrian front was most likely a clever move to prevent the Kaiser's ally from making an individual peace. With Hindenburg in command of her armies this would have been impossible. The Kaiser's astute move seems to have been countered by that of the Grand Duke, but in either case the prophecy of Lord Cromer stands in the way to be fulfilled:

The day of retribution for Austria appears to be at hand. She has to give an account of her stewardship to the auditors, not only of her own country, but also of the civilised world in general. It can scarcely be doubted that their verdict will be unfavourable. The ultimate survival of Austria as a separate political entity is more than doubtful; but, if she is to survive at all, she will certainly have to make a radical change in the principles of government which, under priestly and military influences, have so far guided her action.

In regard to Turkey the views of Lord Cromer are summed up in the title he has chosen for one of his chapters, "The Suicide of the Turk." Lord Cromer was no doubt groping his way, and there is an element of doubt in his remarks:

If there is one result of the present war which may be predicted with some degree of confidence, it is that the fate of Turkey in Europe is sealed. If the Turks are vanquished, they will be swept back into Asia. If, with the help of their allies they are the victors, they will become the vassals of the most egotistical Power in Europe, of which they have allowed themselves to be the subservient tools.

In default of full information it seems fairly safe to assume that the excursion against Egypt last week afforded evidence that the Turks had already become "the vassals of the most egotistical Power in Europe." It is evident that Berlin needed any diversion that could possibly be invented for the purpose of drawing the forces of the Allies from the line of battle to a new area. We have to remember not only the pressure which is being exerted simultaneously by France and Britain, Russia and Italy, but that the Allied army under General Sarrail has been steadily preparing for some time past for an offensive movement. It might take place at any moment now. Hence the Kaiser thought to pursue his ancient tactics. Just as he instituted a violent attack on Verdun in the hope that the Allies would be tempted into a premature advance in order to counteract it, so he has probably encouraged this attack on Egypt in order, if possible, to draw General Sarrail on. From our point of view the most encouraging feature is to be found in the ignorance of Turk and German as to our forces in Egypt. It was absurd to attempt an expedition of this kind with only 14,000 men. It was suicidal in another way. All these attempts have for their main object the idea that they will bring the native, the Egyptian troops, into the arena. But the discontent in Egypt is very greatly exaggerated, and the native who has been enjoying the blessings of good government will not surrender them in order to help a Power which has been hopelessly beaten back in every attack. The recent events will only have the effect of strengthening the British position in Egypt.

Since Lord Cromer wrote, the Arabian Rebellion has occurred, and he is in striking accord with its leaders as to the character of the Young Turk Movement. Lord Cromer asserts that all competent witnesses hold that the Young Turk has proved a complete failure. The Young Turks are struck with the alluring fallacy that the precise, rigid and inhuman

military system of the Germans is a great and victorious one. He cites the picture drawn up by Sir Mark Sykes:

The old evils, it is true, have gone, but new evils have come, and the old virtues are dying. Go where you will in Constantinople, you will find no signs of hope or vitality.

An interesting chapter is that called "The New Europe," which begins with the assertion that every European holds that there ought to be, and must be, some reconstruction of the map of Europe after the present war. Lord Cromer thinks that the principle to be followed is that of nationality, and he engages in the ancient and fascinating task of trying to define what a nation really is. After an interesting dissertation on the subject, he comes to the conclusion that nationality must involve a will to co-operate. Without that will it is certain that no nation can hold its own or prosper. When North America achieved its independence, there was a moment when it seemed probable that the thirteen sovereign States on the Atlantic seaboard might fly asunder. But the will to co-operate saved them, and the conception of a federal territory has been the United States' greatest contribution to political thought. But he does not discuss the application of these principles to the Europe that will emerge from the present great war, and, indeed, the subject is too wide for compression into the limits of a book of essays. Besides, even now, though the prospects of the Allies look more promising than ever they did before, the ultimate issue is in doubt. It would make a very great difference to the reorganisation of Europe whether Germany were beaten into a complete surrender or only reduced to the condition in which she would make a minimum of changes. On the whole, it may be better to leave the discussion of this immensely important branch of the subject until the issue of the war has become definite.

English Mural Monuments and Tombstones. With an Introduction by Walter H. Godfrey, F.S.A. (Batsford, 12s. 6d. net.)

THERE could hardly be a better proof of our varied heritage of seventeenth and eighteenth century wall tablets, table tombs and head stones, than the fact that Mr. Herbert Batsford could choose eighty-four examples for this book without duplicating any of the illustrations in Mr. Lawrence Weaver's "Memorials and Monuments" (published at this office), with the single exception of the Painswick tombs. The eighty-four plates, therefore, unaccompanied by text save for Mr. Godfrey's admirable fifteen introductory pages, make the book a convenient pendant to its predecessor. It is needless to describe the subjects in detail, but perhaps particular reference may be made to the beautiful tablet of 1692 in the Dutch Church, Austin Friars, and to the tablets at St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, and St. Dunstan in the West, London. There is also a special interest in the monument at St. Peter's Church, St. Albans, to Edward Strong, Sir Christopher Wren's master mason. A rather unhappy blunder has been made in giving a title to Plate 45. It describes the tablet as: "Monument erected by Sir Christopher Wren to his wife—Crypt—St. Paul's Cathedral, London—1712." Sir Christopher Wren was twice married, and it is believed that both wives were buried in St. Martin-in-the-Fields, but no monument to either has survived. The Mary Wren buried at St. Paul's was, as might have been seen by the inscription on the monument, not the wife of Sir Christopher Wren, but his son Christopher's first wife, Mary Musard. It would be interesting to know if there is any authority for attributing the design to Sir Christopher. We know that when his devoted daughter Jane died in 1702 Wren went to Francis Bird for her monument, which immediately adjoins Mary Wren's tablet. There is no particular reason for supposing that Sir Christopher would do for the memory of Mary Wren what he evidently shrank from attempting in the case of Jane.

Counter-Currents, by Agnes Repplier, Litt.D. (Constable, 4s. 6d.)

MISS AGNES REPPLIER has given us much material for thought in this modest book, which contains nine short essays published "in their original form" in the *Atlantic Monthly* during the past three years. Her literary style, marked by few mannerisms, is in nothing distinctively American, and her conclusions—though her work is perhaps more suggestive than conclusive—are those of a singularly cool-headed and high-hearted thinker shackled, that the standard of human fallibility may be properly maintained, by one or two quite unexpected prejudices. Of the nine essays, four have in their subject no direct connection with the European war which looms large in the remainder, and three of the four may be said to be complementary to each other. Miss Repplier has very justifiably taken fright at the sentimentality which has begun in America, and in a lesser degree among ourselves, to cloud and confuse the outlook upon life. She instances the cases, by no means rare in her own country, where persons accused of murder have not only found themselves acquitted on the ground of extenuating circumstances, but made the objects of a public ovation. In her second essay it is the kindred topic of the growing inability to bear pain or even dulness, to deserve the rewards of life instead of clamouring for them with which she deals. In "Popular Education" Miss Repplier protests against the theory that the "rights of children" include the doubtful privilege of freedom from restraint and the doubtful boon of shelter from obligation, a preparation for "the heroic business of living and of dying."

which happily has not yet found much favour in England and will now probably find less. The sooner we get it accepted and generally acted upon that character, not circumstances, is a man's capital for the purchase of happiness the better for ourselves and for our children. "The Repeal of Reticence" stands by itself a protest, as she is careful to state, not against "a clearer understanding of sexual relations and hygienic laws," but against "chattering" about these grave matters. There is much here in which we gladly agree with her. It is Miss Repplier's misfortune, in common with most of us, that the sayings and doings of a few persons of outrageous opinion, whether they be obsessed with feminism or blind with selfishness, are apt to acquire too much importance in her eyes; as—"A cruel lesson taught by the war is the degeneracy of the British workman who, in the hour of his country's need, has clung basely to his ease and his sottishness." We almost feel that an apology to the British workman and his son who fill our hospitals with patient wounded is due for even quoting the calumny, and cannot believe that since it has become a known fact that Britain raised a voluntary army of five million men the author has not changed her mind, particularly as we find her in another essay refusing to believe that British labourers asked what difference it would make to them whether they worked for British or German masters. For the most part, though she has no such love for England as she gives to France, Miss Repplier's essays upon the war will be read by English men and women with gratitude and encouragement. It is clear that her reasoned sympathies are entirely with the Allies

and that she personally believes it the duty of her nation—despite the difficulties of dealing with its mixed population—to offer to them something more than neutrality. She says of America, "The things of the spirit are for us, even as for heroic and suffering France, of vital worth and importance. If we could say with certainty, 'All is gained but honour,' there are still some of us who would feel our blessings incomplete."

Royal Palaces and Gardens, painted by Mima Dixon. (A. and C. Black.)

ENVY is one of our emotions in turning over the sixty coloured plates of royal gardens from Peterhof to Corfu, from Aranjuez to Fredensborg, envy for Miss Mima Dixon's opportunities for wandering in such diverse pleasaunces. But we are more grateful than envious, for she has captured their spirit and given us fine bouquets of colour. The descriptions of the gardens are by many hands and adequate for their purpose, but a special word of thanks is due to Mr. Dion Clayton Calthrop. He has contributed by way of introduction a delicate fantasy in praise of all the national manners of garden making. A king meets him in a dream and leads him from country to country. They muse of Dutch exactness, of Italian grandeur and romance, of Arabian mystery and magic, and of English strength. Mr. Calthrop manages to give the atmosphere of each garden with faithfulness and in the spirit of poetry. It is as pretty a posy of imaginary conversations as has been written of late.

CORRESPONDENCE

"SPEED THE PLOUGH."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In view of the proposals to break up grassland it is important to bring to notice the fact that nearly all our old grassland is too heavy to be cultivated at a profit. Heavy clay is too often either "bricks or mortar," as the saying is, when it cannot be worked, and at best the working is too costly to bring a profit on the average of seasons. Moreover, in a suitable season it produces the best crops of wheat, beans and mangold; in a wet season the crops fail. On the same page in which the *Times* reported Professor Middleton's opinion is an estimate for the crops of this year, in which it is stated that the crops are fairly good except the wheats on the "typical wheat lands" which have not got over the wet winter. The greater part of North Germany is a light, sandy loam that is always workable but will not carry grass, consequently it cannot be compared with the greater part of England. In the great depression it was the heavy lands which were allowed to go out of cultivation and tumble down to grass. A great part of this land is very poor and ought to be broken up again, but it would be a grievous mistake to break up the old pastures. A great part of these pastures is in a neglected state, overrun with thistles and other weeds. They sadly need improvement, and would respond well to liberal dressings of basic slag. Tenants, as a rule, take more land than their capital warrants and are, consequently, unable to do the land properly. Landlords and their agents are much to blame in this. Cattle in Germany are seldom grazed in the open, but are housed. All cattle, especially milch cows, are much freer from tuberculosis and more healthy altogether if grazed in the open. Our farmlands generally are in need of capital outlay in bringing buildings up to date and in providing good cottages. The present cost of building is, however, almost prohibitive, and landlords are afraid to lay out money in view of threatened legislation by politicians and faddists. It is most important, too, that the proposed colonies of small-holders should be on land that is easily worked and well supplied with water, or they will certainly fail. Far the best way to establish them would be in connection with schemes for the reclamation of land.—A. R. STEELE, Loddington Hall, Kettering.

[Our correspondent's warning about colonies of small-holders and the advisability of establishing them in connection with schemes of reclamation is most timely.—Ed.]

"RECLAIMING A NORFOLK HEATH."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—You are quite right; the urgency of the question of afforestation, land reclamation and the promotion of the land industry generally is well illustrated in *COUNTRY LIFE* of July 22nd. Your letter on Dr. Edwards' experimentation at Methwold, giving a synopsis of last year's accounts, is excellent. I, too, am working on this matter, and although I have met with a great deal of discouragement—as all land reformers inevitably must—I, none the less, hope that something good may come out of the collective efforts of those who have the interest of the British land industry at heart. One of the most important things to do is to protest against further departmental experimentation, the appointment of Commissions of Enquiry, Royal Commissions, and such like dodges to shirk responsibilities and shelve the question. I sincerely trust that you will do what you can in your columns to show up the palpable insincerity of such futile measures. I, too, in my humble way am also striving to cut off the source from which these paralysing suggestions proceed.—W. E. COOPER.

TREES AND THE LAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It seems rather curious that the old gentleman mentioned by you should have regarded the beech as an injurious tree, seeing how generally recognised is the value of its leaves for leaf-mould. The ash, on the contrary, is, and perhaps rightly, looked on by all country people—at least, I speak for my own county of Herefordshire—as detrimental. As regards English wayside timber generally, no one can love trees better than I do, and I am as far as yourself from wishing to see my native county made to resemble the poplar-bordered roads and fields of France, though these possess a charm

entirely their own. But there is no doubt that we shall now find ourselves compelled to abandon a good deal of the picturesque and sentimental from our lives in order to make room for the practical and profitable; to cultivate necessities instead of luxuries—and some of us so much prefer the luxuries. But there are many cases in which beauty and profit may be made to go together in a rather unexpected way; timber growing, and even timber thinning, will be often found an instance. Woods grown on scientific modern lines may still be beautiful; witness the Highmeadow Woods in the Forest of Dean. Moreover, we have come, I think, to make a sort of fetish of a growing tree, irrespective of whether it is a thing of health, utility and beauty, or, as is very often the case, nothing but matter in the wrong place. One hears people exclaim against the thinning of some favourite wood, totally regardless of the necessity of the work, if only for the health of the remaining trees. The same applies, I think, to some proportion of our cherished hedgerow trees; a fairly drastic thinning might take place in the counties of Worcester, Gloucester and Hereford without much real damage to the picturesque. By the way, in spite of the tempting alliteration of Captain Edwards' "Worcestershire Weed," I fancy Gloucestershire has always claimed the elm under that title as peculiarly her own. A point that was brought forcibly to my notice a year or two ago was the widely varying views of the highway authorities in different localities. A friend of mine owns a moderate-sized mansion and some eight thousand acres of moor in one of the most thinly populated parts of Argyllshire. Behind the house is a fairly extensive belt of woodland, skirted by a road which leads over the moor for about five miles, crosses a wooden bridge celebrated in one of William Black's novels, and serves two—or at most three—small houses on the shore of a salt-water loch, where the road, such as it is, ends. Shortly after a visit I had paid to the place my host told me that he had just been notified by the road surveyor to cut back in his plantations every single bough which overhung this road—a rough moorland track just good enough for a spring-cart, and used by practically nobody but my friend and his tenants—for the few houses at its further end were his. I think he pleaded for delay on account of the absence of nearly all his men at the front, and as he is himself in a famous kilted regiment the matter is perhaps still in abeyance. But what, I wondered, would this road-surveying zealot of Argyllshire think of Herefordshire roads; of highways where the trees, beeches and oaks, meet overhead to form a canopy a mile or more in length without a break; and this in twenty places that I know? Allowed his will, his axe would ruin a landscape at a single stroke. Such powers, in the hands of irresponsible officials who can see no further than the letter of the law, seem full of danger.—ARTHUR O. COOKE.

FORESTRY ON SMALL ESTATES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There has been much said, and well said, on forestry on a very large scale, and no doubt it is worth due thought from a national point of view. But for every large area for forestry on a vast scale there are hundreds of estates in which woodland is neglected and no wise planting done. In many places limited in extent right work in planting might be well shown. And the poorer the land for arable or pasture the greater the need for the right tree. Let me urge, therefore, the need of wood plantings on a smaller scale. For every experiment of that kind there are hundreds of places in which poor land might well be planted as productive woodland. There is much land under some form of cultivation—grass or arable—which never gives any good return, and often the best thing to do with such land would be to plant it with some useful tree. I had a sour, cold corner of a pasture field which never grew anything but weeds and rushes until I put a quick fence round it and planted Siberian spruce. These have grown well in a dozen years, and now make a beautiful picture with useful trees. Even 50 acres of land are worth planting. The growth of coniferous trees is so rapid that a man even in middle life may hope to see stately woods of his own growing. The elements of forestry are simple enough to enable one to carry out good work on a small scale. Large districts are entirely bare of trees which might produce good timber if trees were planted that suited the soil. The poorest and barest landscape effects in our islands are so owing to neglect of planting trees—downland in England, bare mountain-land in Wales, much of Ireland.

In each of these regions trees may be found to grow well—the beech on the downland, and also the Austrian pine; larch on the poorest mountain-land; white pine, the finest tree of North-Eastern America, on rocky mountains; the Sitka spruce on wet land; and, where there is copious rainfall, the Corsican pine on poor, cold land, or, indeed, anywhere in our islands. The main question is to adapt the tree to the soil, and in doing that we may in good time get rid of the ugly, barren aspects of much of our treeless land, and that without encroaching on the land good for arable or good pasture.—WILLIAM ROBINSON.

HEDGEROW TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I did not read Captain Edwards' letter on this subject, but your correspondent (Mr. William Robinson of Gravetye, Sussex) in your issue of July 15th, writes from a purely agricultural point of view, and if he had his way the beauty of the English landscape, which appeals so much to foreigners, would be lost. In several of the English counties, notably Somerset, Devon and parts of Dorset, the hedgerow timber is not only a "thing of beauty," but a very valuable asset. Elm trees in these counties are kept "shrouded up," and periodically produce large quantities of good straight-grown timber, while the suckers which these trees throw out when "plashed" on a bank make an excellent fence against cattle. Trees in a wood are without doubt in their proper place, but are of no use for shade or shelter for cattle, unless the pasturage is entirely surrounded by such woods, as the wind does not always blow from the same direction, nor does the sun, with the accompanying flies, always shine on the same spot. Trees grouped in a pasture require fencing for many years, and when of any size to be of use in sheltering cattle are gradually destroyed by the rubbing and stamping of such cattle. If Mr. Robinson elects to live in a county celebrated for its open downs, for goodness sake let him live there; but let him leave other people who have an eye for the *dulce* as well as the *utile* to carry on the methods which obtain in their individual counties.—WILLIAM H. BOND.

TREE SHELTERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am desirous of supplementing a screen of deciduous trees, mostly birch, against the north and north-east winds with coniferous trees as being a greater protection in winter, and am anxious to plant the best trees for the purpose. The Douglas, the spruce, the Scots are the three kinds recommended by a local nurseryman. The Austrian is the fir that I fancy as the most suitable, being of a strong bushy growth, but the local nurseryman says it is a bad tree to transplant. The Douglas here grows fast and very bushy at the base, but is long and tapering at the top, which suggests to me that it is tender and therefore liable to be nipped by the frost or snapped by a strong wind. The Scots looks to me too thin a tree for shelter, and the same remark might apply to the spruce. The soil is light and sandy and the situation high, but the actual spots where I purpose planting the trees are sheltered by others (deciduous). If you can give me any advice on the matter I should be very grateful. I should have said the county is Bucks and that the spots are rather shaded by the existing trees, though, of course, clear above.—ADAM BLACK.

[Much must depend on the depth of the screen. Two varieties would do well in such a situation: Sitka spruce (*Abies Menziesii*) and Austrian pine (*Pinus austriaca nigra*). The Austrian pine is stormproof. It stands drought and frost, thrives on poor soil, chalky or not, and bears shade fairly well. It forms a strong, dense crown. As large specimens are not easy to transplant, use transplanted two year old plants, straight from the nursery, and as they do not grow as fast as Scotch pine, a little artificial manure might help. These would be the best if only a few trees can be planted. The Sitka spruce would probably do best in the long run, although a little tapering of shape, if some rows of it could be planted in quincunx. It grows faster than the Austrian pine and forms perfect shelter belts. —E.D.]

THE EXTERMINATION OF RARE PLANTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I sincerely trust that your much needed warning appended to "G. F.'s" letter will be taken to heart by those thoughtless persons who think it no shame to gather our rarer orchids by the handful, as if they were buttercups and daisies. Here is a case in point. Some three years ago a friend of mine found—I need hardly say did not gather—a single specimen of the rare Lizard Orchis (*O. hircina*) in the neighbourhood of Guildford. This year he searched the same locality, but could find no trace of the plant. Covers drawn blank—but the failure is hardly surprising in view of the perpetration of the following outrage, the account of which I had on the best authority: Two years ago a party of pupils from a neighbouring girls' school were seen to visit the locality in question armed with trowels, and I was told that they dug up and carried off such specimens of the *O. hircina* as they could find—not more, probably, than three or four at the outside, but on this my informant could not speak with certainty. In the same district grows the Green-man Orchis (*Aceras anthropophora*). Last year I found several spikes. This year I did not visit their habitat till the end of July—rather late it is true, but fruiting spikes ought to have been there. Not one was to be seen. I could only infer, that the wholesale enthusiast (of the "G. F." type) had made her rounds.—H. A. EVANS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I wish to add a note on the destruction of our wild orchids. It evidently occurs more particularly in places within easy reach of London. In certain Surrey woods some friends and I discovered a single specimen (the only one, we believe) of the narrow-leaved helleborine (*Cephalanthera ensifolia*), which we photographed *in situ*. The plate, unfortunately, was spoilt in developing. We have since heard that a botanist, certainly not a Nature-lover, has offered 5s. for the bulb of the dragon orchid, as it is called by the cottagers. The plant, however, we believe, has not been found, though not for lack of searching. Its exact locality is only known to a few. This botanist has also been taking away large numbers of roots of the bee orchis from a neighbouring

field (private property), where I have seen almost hundreds this year. If many people do this sort of thing, it is no wonder that our rare plants do not increase.—G. E. MAYNARD.

BEEES IN CORNWALL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The headline of this letter is not, perhaps, on all fours with the famous "Snakes in Ireland," but I have been struck with the fact, in some journeys among the flowers and blossoms and lovely heather of Cornwall, that there is a great scarcity of bees everywhere in the Duchy, and that one can hardly ever discover a hive in a cottager's garden, and this at a time when beeswax and honey are fetching the highest prices. In Brittany and Switzerland one finds the skips in rows on wooden shelves in the poorest villagers' gardens. I have made some enquiry in the local Press as to this curious shortcoming, and various explanations have been kindly offered to me from the unfortunate importation of Italian queens to the lack of knowledge of perambulating county bee experts paid from public funds. Whatever may be the cause or causes of the absence of bees in Cornwall, I feel that the circumstance warrants mention in COUNTRY LIFE, where it may attract the notice of those who are able to effect an improvement. I believe that the wax and honey obtained in many a Swiss peasant's garden pays the rent, rates and taxes.—J. LANDFEAR LUCAS.

THE ORIGIN OF A FAMILIAR QUOTATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—"Country Notes" of July 29th refer to Byron as the author of "Twas whispered in Heaven, 'Twas muttered in Hell," etc., but "Chamber's Cyclopædia of English Literature" gives "A Riddle on the letter H" as the best known poem of Catherine Maria Fanshawe (1765–1834), and says it is commonly credited to Lord Byron (1788–1824).—F. E. S.

THE PROPER WORK OF THE SHIRE HORSE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—People seem to forget that each class of horse is suitable for its special purpose; a Derby winner is not suitable for a plough nor a Shire horse for a Derby race, but each is splendid in its own sphere. There is no better horse for the farm than the Shire horse. It is the most powerful domestic animal except an elephant or a camel, which as yet are not in the running here; it is good tempered, active and enduring; just the horse for the plough, for heavy loads, and even suitable for big carts in the streets of London. It is absurd to blame him as a failure in warfare; it is not his work—he is not fast enough nor light enough. As for feather, it is said it is proof of bone; that is a matter for veterinary surgeons to decide. It would be a great blessing if show judges set no account on feather, for the mares could be more employed at work; but work spoils the feather, so that show horses cannot be worked. In my humble opinion the great necessity is the elimination of unsound sires; it is amazing that some horses which are known to be unsound can still obtain enormous fees as sires.—E. D. STERN.

SONGS AND SAILORS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Being abroad I only recently received your issue of May containing the article on "Sailors' Chanties." May I be allowed to add to one or two letters of comment which have already appeared? The author of the article, who, judging by internal evidence, is not a seaman, seems to be under the impression that chanties were used in the Navy. The charming photograph at the head of the article (which represents boys apparently working braces on one of the old training brigs which were finally abolished in 1906) is entitled, "Chorus . . . like Trojans." Now this is just what they did *not* do in the sailing days of the Royal Navy! Observe the boatswain's mate piping at the gangway. Chanties were confined to the Merchant Service, and many of the best, like "Shenandoah"—which your correspondent does not mention—date from the early days of the American clippers, say, the 'forties of last century. In that delightful work—"The Clipper Ship Era"—your readers will find information on this and other features of the last and palmy days of the sailing ship. Dibdin's reputation and popularity existed chiefly among landmen. The seaman has never had much use for him, and, except for such songs as "Tom Bowling," "Hearts of Oak" or "The Midshipmite," which are well known on their own merits to everyone from childhood onwards, the so-called sea songs written by landmen have never been popular either in the windjammer's fo'c'sle or on the lower deck of the man-of-war. But the chanties were in a different class. They were *real* seamen's songs, although they often hardly allude to the sea at all, and you will not find in them such a dreadful line as "The dingy scud drove 'cross the sky!" The seaman who has been beating to windward off the Horn for six weeks does not want to sing about it! He prefers something that reminds him of his favourite haunts at, say, Glasgow or London or San Francisco. It is only the landman who thrills over the "dingy scud!" The chanties were made and sung with a purpose by seamen themselves, and those of us who knew the ships cannot recall without regret such things as the plaintive, haunting refrain of "Rio Grand"—sung in slow time by the hands tramping round the capstan as the cable came home and the fore tops'l was loosed. The chanty, as formerly known, has almost vanished, even in the spike-boomed, double top-gallant yard iron tramp with a scanty Dago crew that now generally represents the sailing ship in her last degenerate days. Would it be possible for COUNTRY LIFE, the leading journal in photographic illustration, to resuscitate some of the old photographs of the sailing days? There are, or were, in Plymouth and Portsmouth, particularly, old negatives in the possession of individuals and firms depicting such subjects as sail drill and evolutions under sail in the training squadrons or the Channel Fleet even back as far as the 'sixties. I venture to think COUNTRY LIFE would be doing a service to the public by getting hold of some of these old plates and printing from them, besides adding—if that were possible—yet another charm to its pages.—H. S. VAUGHAN.

[We are very much obliged to our correspondent for his excellent suggestion, of which we hope to take advantage.—ED.]

MORE ABOUT THE CAPTURED LEATHERY TURTLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I add a supplement to the letter of "F. F. T." on the leathery turtle, which appeared in your issue of July 15th? Your readers may like to know that a complete cast of this rare and most interesting reptile has now been made, and I am preparing dissections and casts of the limbs and of the breast shield. In due course the skeleton will be exhibited in the Reptile Gallery. The leathery turtle is not only one of the rarest of the marine turtles, but it is also the most interesting structurally, differing from all other chelonians in having the carapace, or back shield, made up of a



SHOWING CARAPACE AND BREAST FINS.

number of small interlocking plates covered with a thin leathery skin, and forming a shield which is separated from the internal skeleton by a thick layer of blubber. In all the other chelonians the back shield is welded to the ribs. Moreover, it is formed of a number of large plates, symmetrically disposed and overlaid by a number of thick horny plates having a totally different arrangement to that of the underlying bones. The freshwater turtles of the genus trionychia, however, are an exception to this rule, since in them the horny plates have degenerated, a thin leathery skin taking their place; but the bony shell is that of the typical chelonian type. The leathery turtle is exceedingly rare in British waters, and is anything but plentiful in its natural habitat, which embraces all the seas of the tropical and temperate regions. I have reason to believe, however, that the specimens from the Atlantic are distinct from those of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Geologically the leathery turtle is extremely ancient, dating back to the London clay of Sheppy, compared with which, however, the existing species is almost a dwarf! I add a picture of the side view of the Penzance specimen, which gives a good idea of the form of the carapace and breast-fins.—W. P. PYCRAFT, Natural History Museum, South Kensington.

DOING HER HUSBAND'S WORK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Please find enclosed photograph, which I thought would be suitable for publication in your paper. The lady is Mrs. Butterfield of Gonalston, Notts, who is doing the duty of "gamekeeperess" (officially) for her husband, who is serving his King and Country, and she has a written agreement to that effect until he returns.—H. T. EBORALL.



AN OFFICIAL "GAMEKEEPERESS."

he would be acting in the interests of the community unless he uses the land in such a manner as to secure the economic value it possesses while preserving as far as possible its æsthetic value as a park. Can you point him to some article in any of your past issues that will supply the guidance he needs, or, failing that, will you deal with the question in the early future?—A. H. GREY.

[The best thing to do in this case would be to apply a good manuring to the grass so as to produce an abundant crop of hay and aftermath, which will yield a good return to the owner, help towards the production of food, and in no way spoil the amenities.—Ed.]

HARVEST IN SOMERSET.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was rather surprised to see your article in COUNTRY LIFE on the serious position of the corn crops, for in this part of the country I think they are as good as at any time and better than in most years. As regards the corn holding out, I think it a good sign, as that generally means a good yield. Wheat harvest has commenced in some early places near here. The barley crop is a heavy one; if rain came it would be laid. The mangel crop is a good one; swedes and turnips a good plant, but the two latter crops want rain, as also do the pastures. Hay harvest nearly over; a good crop and most of it well saved, but some of it damaged by rain. Milk is getting short.—JAMES TURNER, Taunton.

[Crops have improved wonderfully with the recent sunshine, and we are very glad to hear that the outlook is so good in Somerset.—Ed.]

URBS IN RUR.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In view of the considerable number of town-bred women who have recently left their usual surroundings and have gone on to the land for the purpose of increasing its output, the enclosed snapshots may be of interest. They picture a fifteenth century farm house in Sussex and its lady tenant



A FIFTEENTH CENTURY SUSSEX FARM HOUSE



—AND A TWENTIETH CENTURY FARMER.

ministering to the wants of her pigs. Until three months ago this lady had lived in a London suburb, but has quite acclimatised herself to the new conditions.—G. WATKINSON ROBERTS.

THE USEFUL OWL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On Saturday evening, July 15th, I was practically reminded of the recent controversy in your valuable paper concerning the barn and brown owls when the great benefit and useful service they do to the farmer was, I think, amply proved. For about twenty minutes I watched a pair of parent brown owls providing supper for their brood, an incessant flight between our barn end, where the owl nursery lies, and a newly mown meadow about 200yd. distant. Every journey each parent brought back one mouse, sometimes two, one in beak and one in claw. The rapidity and short interval of the return journey with the prisoner mouse was marvellous. Of course, this game goes on in the dusk every evening while the hungry owlets demand their supper. I may say that some years ago we fitted up nesting boxes in the gable of a huge old barn where the owls have a free flight over stored corn, cattle boxes, calf pens, cow tyings, etc., and the result is that every year we have had three or four broods of barn or brown owls, and that, with the help of my little terrier "Tiny," not a rat nor mouse can exist in our stack-yard or farm buildings. Last year we found dropped outside the owl boxes the remains of a stoat and of rats frequently. I hope you may consider this testimony to the value of our useful friend the owl worthy of insertion in your valuable paper.—E. EATWELL, Bradfield Hall Farm, Berks.

WITHIN SOUND OF THE GUNS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—You have published so many letters lately from correspondents in Kent saying how distinctly they can hear the guns "over there," but none from any other county in England. It would be interesting to know how far West the sound carries. Here, just beyond the Downs which lie behind Brighton, we hear them almost incessantly, day and night. The direction of the wind makes no difference in the distinctness of the sound, therefore it is assumed that we really only hear the echo from the hills, especially as they are very seldom heard in Brighton itself. It would be most interesting to find out how much further inland the guns can be heard. Perhaps some of your correspondents would report.—M. G. S. BEST.

A BELGIAN SPIRE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Somewhere in Belgium only on June 1st I sketched a church tower already somewhat mutilated. The day after I was at the same spot and found the spire gone. A shell had demolished it an hour after my first note was made. Your readers may like to compare the two.—SUBALTERN, R.E.

TITS USING FORMER NESTING SITES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I notice that one of your correspondents asks for instances of tits returning to the same nesting site. I have heard people saying (rather off-hand) that a tit nests in such and such a place (usually a pump) every year, but never in my own experience have I found this to be the case. Mr. Oliver Pike, in his "Bird Life in Wild Wales," says that a certain nest "has become quite historic, the kite, buzzard and kestrel (I think the birds are) having all used it in turn." It may be of interest to your readers to know of a parallel case, though in this instance the nest is not a huge platform of sticks, but a modest hole. There is an apple tree at Monaughty Polth, Radnorshire, which the great tit, the tree sparrow and the marsh tit occupied in successive seasons (1913-15). I do not know whether it had a tenant in previous seasons, but it is interesting to note how far this passing on of nesting sites may go, as the blue tit, pied flycatcher and redstart are common in that particular county; while the hole is situated quite low enough to suit the cole tit, though that is rarer thereabouts.—BIRD LOVER.

A HOUSE MARTIN FEEDING ON THE GROUND

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Last week while walking through a field near Shrewsbury my attention was attracted by a house martin which kept hovering over the grass. Being a lover of birds I stopped and watched it. Presently it alighted, and I was much surprised to see it pull a worm from the ground and fly off to its nest. I was, however, unable to ascertain whether this contained young. I thought it possible that through the medium of your splendid paper I might obtain an explanation, as I think it exceptional for the swallow family to feed on the ground. I am much interested in the splendid bird photography which appears in COUNTRY LIFE.—V. F. C.

[It certainly sounds doubtful. We have never heard of the martin, which is an insectivorous bird, eating worms, and we think our correspondent's eyes must have deceived him. Had the bird been a swallow it might have been picking up a twig or straw for its nest.—ED.]

A BIRD VISITOR TO THE ARUN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I saw a bird on the Arun to-day which is unknown to me, and I cannot find it in any book. The size of a very small goose, with a bent neck; head grey; a reddish-brown patch on the eye; a chocolate ring round the neck, and patch at the back. Breast buff, shading to grey, with a chocolate patch in the middle; back smoke grey; wings white, with broad black edges. Can any of your readers enlighten me?—S.

[The bird was probably a golden-eye, but it is extremely difficult to identify birds from a written description only.—ED.]

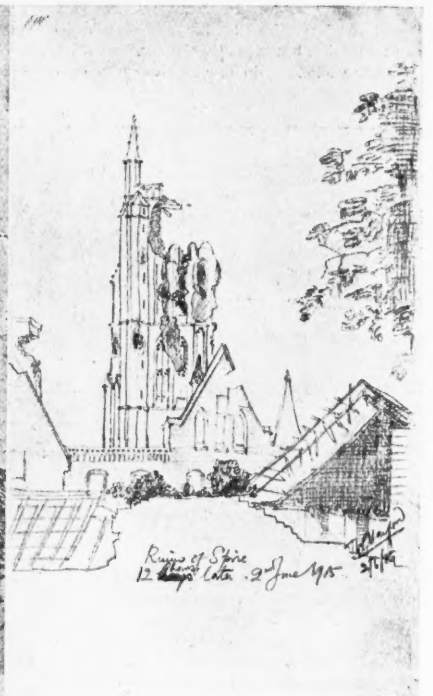
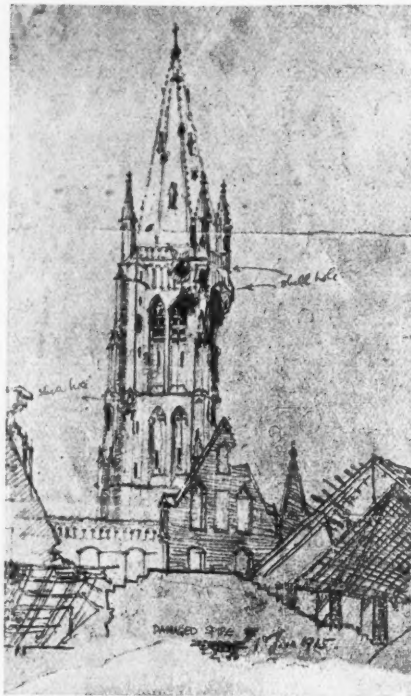
BIRDS AND WHITE CURRANTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have in my garden two rows of young currant trees, one red and one white. All the trees had a very fair crop of fruit, but now the red ones have hardly a berry left on them. All have been taken by the birds, while the white are untouched and hanging in beautiful bunches. I should like to know if this is a usual experience; if so, it is a strong reason for the growing of white rather than red currants. The flavour is quite a good one, and though, like the blackbirds, we may prefer the red colour, it seems better to make more use of the white so as to obtain a far larger supply of fruit. I am told that

white currant jelly is delightful both in appearance and flavour. I have had no experience with yellow raspberries. Are they also less attractive to birds? Yellow raspberry jam is excellent.—EMILY O. PARR.

[We know from experience that birds will attack white or yellow raspberries quite as greedily as they will the commoner varieties. We do not,



YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY.

therefore, recommend the planting of white or yellow raspberries on a large scale. The fruits make a welcome change for dessert, but they are naturally of a very insipid colour when stewed or used for jam making or preserves, and they compare most unfavourably with the rich red colour of the common raspberry. We have taken the opportunity of asking several market-growers their experience with birds and white currants, and they are all agreed that birds show preference for red and black varieties, although the white varieties do not escape attention. Our correspondent is fortunate with white currants—it may be that the variety is late in ripening its fruits; but of this we feel sure that once the birds get the flavour of the fruits, the crop will quickly diminish unless the bushes are protected by netting or some other means.—ED.]

OPEN AIR DOMESTIC WORK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was interested while staying in Scotland to see how much more work is done out of doors there than in the South, in spite of the fact that their



AN IMPROVEMENT ON THE LAUNDRY.

climate is not such a dry one as that in England. In this respect the Scottish are more like the French and Swiss, who do a great deal of their work in the open. It must certainly be nicer for the women in Scotland to do the washing in the open air than stooping over their tubs in some hot, stuffy room. I enclose a photograph of a Highland washing.—MAUDE TEEVAN.